

1609/5625.

DISCOURSES  
ON  
SEVERAL SUBJECTS  
AND  
OCCASIONS.  
IN TWO VOLUMES.

DEPT OF K&S

GENERAL SUBJECTS

DISCOURSES

OF THE

SEVERAL SUBJECTS

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OCCASIONS

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

DISCOURSES  
ON  
SEVERAL SUBJECTS  
AND  
OCCASIONS.

---

BY GEORGE HORNE, D.D.  
DEAN OF CANTERBURY, AND  
PRESIDENT OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

---

VOLUME THE FIRST.

---

THE THIRD EDITION.

---

OXFORD:

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS, MDCCCLXXVII.  
PRINTED FOR D. PRINCE AND J. COOKE, OXFORD;  
AND J. F. AND. C. RIVINGTON, G. ROBINSON,  
AND T. CADELL, LONDON.

DECOLRES

SEVERAL SUBJECTS

OCCASIONS

BY GEORGE HONNE, D.D.

DEAN OF LINCOLN AND

PROVOST OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD

VOLUME THE FIRST

THE THIRD EDITION



OXFORD

AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

PRINTED BY J. B. HARRISON, ST. ALBAN'S

AND BY J. B. HARRISON, ST. ALBAN'S

AND T. C. L. LONDON

## P R E F A C E.

**H**AVING been prevented, for a time, by the discharge of a laborious, but highly honourable office, from performing the more immediate duties of my profession, I was yet desirous, that I might not seem to lose the clergyman in the magistrate, of still continuing to do something towards promoting the great end and purpose of life. And though the frequent returns of business gave little hopes of composing fresh discourses, it's intervals, I thought, might suffice to digest and publish some, which had been already composed.

This form of publication is generally supposed less advantageous, at present, than any other. But it may be questioned, whether the supposition does justice to the age, when we consider only the respect which has so recently been paid to the sermons of

the learned and elegant Dr. BLAIR. And greater respect cannot be paid them, than they deserve.

The multitude of old sermons affords no argument against the publication of new ones; since new ones will be read, when old ones are neglected; and almost all mankind are, in this respect, *Athenians*.

Besides, there is a *taste* in moral and religious, as well as in other compositions, which varies in different ages, and may very lawfully and innocently be indulged. Thousands received instruction and consolation formerly from sermons, which would not now be endured. The preachers of them served their generation, and are blessed for evermore. But because provision was made for the wants of the last century in one way, there is no reason why it should not be made for the wants of this, in another. The next will behold a set of writers  
of

of a fashion suited to it, when our discourses shall, in their turn, be antiquated and forgotten among men; though, if any good be wrought by them in this their day, our hope is, with that of faithful Nehemiah, that our God will remember us concerning them!

But as the productions of every author, who adds to the number, are expected to contain something new, either in matter, or manner, it will naturally be asked, what are my pretensions? I will beg leave to deliver my sentiments on the subject in the words of the excellent and amiable FENELON, extracted from the last of his most admirable *Dialogues on the Eloquence of the Pulpit*.

“ I would have a preacher explain the  
“ whole plan of religion, and unfold every  
“ part of it in the most intelligible manner,  
“ by shewing the origin and establishment,  
“ the tradition and connection of it's prin-  
“ ciples, it's sacraments and institutions.

“ For every thing in Scripture is connected ; and this connection is, perhaps, the most extraordinary and wonderful thing to be seen in the sacred writings.

“ An audience of persons, who had heard the chief points of the Mosaic history and law well explained, would be able to receive far more benefit from an explication of the truths of the Gospel, than the generality of Christians are now.

“ Preachers speak every day to the people, of the Scriptures, the Church, the Patriarchs, the Law, the Gospel ; of Sacrifice, of Moses, and Aaron, and Melchisedek ; of Christ, the Prophets, and Apostles ; but there is not sufficient care taken to instruct men in the meaning of these things, and the characters of these holy persons.

“ This

## P R E F A C E.

v

“ This way of having recourse to the  
“ first foundations of religion, would be so  
“ far from seeming low, that it would give  
“ most discourses that force and beauty  
“ which they generally want; since the  
“ hearers can never be instructed or per-  
“ suaded in the mysteries of religion, if you  
“ do not trace things back to their source.

“ For example—How can you make  
“ them understand what the church says,  
“ after St. Paul, that Jesus Christ is our  
“ PASSOVER, if you do not explain to  
“ them the Jewish Passover, which was  
“ appointed to be a perpetual memorial of  
“ their deliverance from Egypt, and to ty-  
“ pify a more important redemption, that  
“ was reserved for Messiah?

“ Almost every thing in religion is his-  
“ torical. The best way of proving it's  
“ truth, is to represent it justly; for then

“ it carries it's own evidence along with  
“ it. A coherent view of the chief facts  
“ relative to any person, or transaction,  
“ should be given in a concise, lively, close,  
“ pathetic manner, accompanied with such  
“ moral reflections as arise from the several  
“ circumstances, and may best instruct the  
“ hearers.

“ A preacher ought to affect people by  
“ strong images ; but it is from the Scrip-  
“ ture that he should learn to make power-  
“ ful impressions. There he may clearly  
“ discover the way to render sermons plain  
“ and popular, without losing the force  
“ and dignity they ought always to possess.

“ If the clergy applied themselves to  
“ this mode of teaching, we should then  
“ have two different sorts of preachers.  
“ They who are not endowed with a great  
“ share of vivacity, would explain the  
“ Scripture clearly, without imitating it's  
“ lively

“ lively and animated manner ; and if they  
“ expounded the word of God judiciously,  
“ and supported their doctrine by an ex-  
“ emplary life, they would be very good  
“ preachers. They would employ what  
“ St. Ambrose requires, a chaste, simple,  
“ clear style, full of weight and gravity,  
“ without affecting elegance, or despising  
“ the smoothness and graces of language.  
“ The other sort, being of a poetical turn  
“ of mind, would explain the holy book  
“ in it's own style and figures ; and by that  
“ means become accomplished preachers.  
“ The former would instruct their hearers  
“ with solidity and perspicuity ; the latter  
“ would add to this instruction the sublimi-  
“ ty, the vehemence, and divine enthusiasm  
“ of the Scripture, which would be (if I  
“ may so say) entire and living in them, as  
“ much as it can be in men, who are not  
“ miraculously inspired from above.”

This, Reader, is the model which I

have chosen, and after which I have humbly endeavoured to work. I count not myself to have attained—Far, very far indeed from it; as you will too soon discover. I have not yet been able by any means to satisfy myself; nor can I hope to satisfy you. I have done as well as I could; and know not that it will be in my power to do better. Nobler and more extensive ideas rise before me; but planning and executing are very different things. Time hastens forward; and life, attended with its cares, perhaps its sorrows, will quickly have run its course. Accept such as I can give, and pardon errors and imperfections. I stand at the door of the temple, with my torch, If you would view its glories, enter in, and there dwell for ever.

# CONTENTS.

## DISCOURSE. I.

### The Creation of Man.

GEN. I. 26.

*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

Page 1.

Preached before the Univerfity of Oxford,  
at St. Mary's, June 9. 1771.

D I S-

## CONTENTS.

### DISCOURSE II.

The Garden of Eden.

GEN. II. 8.

*And the Lord God planted a garden eastward  
in Eden; and there he put the man whom  
he had formed.* ————— 37.

Preached before the University of Oxford,  
at St. Mary's, June 16. 1771.

### DISCOURSE III.

The Tree of Life.

GEN. II. 9.

*The Tree of Life also in the midst of the  
garden.* ————— 71.

Preached before the University of Oxford,  
at St. Mary's, Oct. 18. 1772.

### DISCOURSE IV.

The Tree of Knowledge.

GEN. II. 17,

*Of the Tree of the Knowledge of good and  
evil thou shalt not eat.* ————— 101.

# CONTENTS.

## DISCOURSE V.

The Prince of Peace.

ZECH. IX. 9. 10.

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even unto sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.*

131.

Preached before the University of Oxford,  
at St. Mary's, Dec. 2. 1764. being the first  
Sunday in Advent.

D I S-

## CONTENTS.

### DISCOURSE VI.

The King of Glory.

REV. I. 7.

*Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him; and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*

159.

Preached before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's, Dec. 11. 1757. being the third Sunday in Advent.

### DISCOURSE VII.

The Word Incarnate.

JOHN I. 14.

*The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.* — 191.

Preached before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's, Dec. 17. 1769. being the third Sunday in Advent.

DIS-

# CONTENTS.

## DISCOURSE VIII.

The Case of the Jews.

JOHN I. II.

*His own received him not.* — 219.

Preached before the University of Oxford,  
at St. Mary's, Dec. 12. 1773. being the  
third Sunday in Advent.

## DISCOURSE IX.

The Beloved Disciple.

JOHN. XXI. 7.

*That Disciple whom Jesus loved.* 261

Preached before the University of Oxford,  
at St. Mary's, Dec. 27. 1768. being the  
Festival of St. John the Evangelist.

DIS-

# C O N T E N T S.

## D I S C O U R S E X.

Rachel Comforted.

J E R. XXXI. 15, 16, 17.

*Thus saith the LORD, a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping : Rachel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the LORD, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears ; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border. — 285.*

Preached before the University of Oxford,  
at St. Mary's, Dec. 28. 1772. being the  
Festival of *The holy Innocents.*

D I S-

## CONTENTS.

### DISCOURSE XI.

#### The Circumcision.

LUKE II. 21.

*And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel, before he was conceived in the womb.*

317.

Preached before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's, Jan. 1. 1763. being the Festival of the Circumcision.

### DISCOURSE XII.

#### The Epiphany.

MATTH. II. 1, 2.

*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,*

## CONTENTS.

*Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is  
born king of the Jews? For we have seen  
his star in the east, and are come to wor-  
ship him.* ————— 345.

Preached before the University of Oxford,  
at St. Mary's, Jan. 6. 1772. being the  
Festival of the Epiphany.

# DISCOURSE I.

## THE CREATION OF MAN.

GEN. i. 26.

*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

**C**URIOSITY naturally prompts us Disc. 1.  
to enquire into the records of the family, or society, to which we belong. Every little incident, that befel our ancestors, is collected with care, and remembered with pleasure. The relation it bears to us gives it consequence in our eyes, though, in the eyes of others, it may seem to have none. The mind, in it's progress, finds attention excited, as the velocity of a

DISC. falling body is increased; nor can it repose  
I. itself at ease on any account, which stops  
short of the original and first founder of  
the community.

Every motive of this sort conspires to animate our researches into the origination of mankind, and the history of our common progenitor. We cannot but earnestly and anxiously wish to be acquainted with the circumstances relative to the father of that family, of which all nations are parts; to discover and survey the root of that tree, whose branches have overspread the earth.

Nor can such investigation be deemed matter of curiosity only. To form proper ideas of man, it is necessary we should view him as he came from the hands of his Creator. We must know, in what state he was placed, what were the duties resulting from that state, and what the powers whereby he was enabled to perform them. We must learn, whether he be now in the same state, or whether an alteration in his  
state

state may not have subjected him to new **Disci-**  
wants, and new obligations. Upon a know- **I.**  
lege of these particulars, every system of  
religion and morality must be constructed,  
which is designed for the use of men. A  
system in which the consideration of these  
hath no place, is like a course of diet pre-  
scribed by a physician, unacquainted with  
his patient's constitution, and with the na-  
ture of the disease under which he has the  
misfortune to labour.

It is obvious to remark, that this know-  
ledge of human nature, of what it was at the  
beginning, and what alterations have since  
happened in it, is a knowledge to the at-  
tainment of which no strength of genius,  
no depth of reasoning, no subtlety of me-  
taphysical disquisition can ever lead us. It  
is a matter of fact, and must be ascertain-  
ed, as matters of fact are, by evidence and  
testimony. But he only, who made man,  
can inform us, how man was made; with  
what endowments, and for what purposes.  
If he hath not done it, the world is, of

**Disc.** necessity, left in utter ignorance of so capital a point. And this reflection alone may supply the place of a thousand arguments, to convince us that he hath done it.

1.

We find an opinion current through heathen antiquity, that all is not right with the human race; that things were not at first as they are now, but that a change hath been introduced for the worse. When the Philosophers tell us, that mankind were sent upon earth to do penance for crimes by them committed in a pre-existent state, what is it but saying, that man once was upright and happy; but that ceasing to be upright, he ceased to be happy; and that natural evil is the consequence and punishment of moral. Nor is it at all difficult to discern, through the fictions of the poets, those truths which gave birth to them, while we read of a golden age, when righteousness and peace kissed each other; of a man framed of clay, and animated by a spark of celestial fire; of a woman endowed with every gift and grace from above;

above; and of the fatal casket, out of **Disc.**  
which, when opened by her, a flight of cala- **I.**  
mities overspread the earth; but not with-  
out a reserve of **HOPE**, that, at some fu-  
ture period of refreshment and restitution,  
they should be done away. Such are the  
shadowy scenes, which, by the faint glim-  
mering of tradition reflected from an ori-  
ginal revelation, present themselves in that  
night of the world, the æra of pagan fable  
and delusion, when the imaginations of  
poetry and the conjectures of philosophy  
were equally unable to supply the informa-  
tion which had been long lost, concerning  
the origin of the world, of man, and of evil.

With this information we are furnished  
by the writings of Moses, penned under  
the direction of him who giveth to man  
the spirit of understanding, for the instruc-  
tion of ages and generations. We are told,  
by whom the matter of which our system  
is composed, was brought into being; and  
in what manner the several objects around  
us were gradually and successively formed,

**Disc.** till the whole, compleatly finished, and  
I. surveyed by it's great author, was pronounced *good*, or fit in every respect, to answer the end for which it was designed.

After this are related the particulars concerning the formation of man; the time of his production; the resolution taken upon the occasion; the materials of which he was composed; the divine image in which God created him; and the dominion over the creatures with which he was invested. It is intended, in the following discourse to offer such considerations, as may be of use towards the explanation and illustration of these particulars in their order.

With regard to the *time* of man's formation, we may observe of the divine procedure, what is true of every human plan, concerted with wisdom and foresight; that which was first in intention, was last in execution. Man, for whom all things were made, was himself made last of all. We are taught to follow the heavenly artist,  
step

step by step, first in the production of the **Disc.**  
inanimate elements, next of vegetable, **I.**  
and then of animal life, till we come to  
the masterpiece of the creation, man en-  
dued with reason and intellect. The house  
being built, it's inhabitant appeared ; the  
feast being set forth, the guest was intro-  
duced ; the théâtre being decorated and il-  
luminated, the spectator was admitted, to  
behold the splendid and magnificent scene-  
ry in the heavens above, and the earth be-  
neath ; to view the bodies around him  
moving in perfect order and harmony, and  
every creature performing the part allotted  
it in the universal drama ; that, seeing,  
he might understand, and understanding,  
adore it's supreme author and director.

Not that, even in the original and per-  
fect state of his intellectual powers, he was  
left to demonstrate the being of a God,  
either *a priori*, or *a posteriori*. His Crea-  
tor, we find, immediately, manifested him-  
self to him, and conversed with him, in-  
forming him, without all doubt, of what

**Disc.** had passed previous to his own existence,  
 1. which otherwise he never could have known; instructing him, how, and for what purpose the world and man were made, and to whom he was bound to ascribe all praise and glory on that account. The loss of this instruction occasioned some of his descendants, in after ages, to worship the creature instead of the Creator. Ignorant of him who gave the sun for a light by day, they fell prostrate before that bright image of it's Maker's glory, which to the eye of sense appeared to be the God that governed the world.

The other parts of this system were produced by the word of the Creator. "He spake and it was done." The elements were his servants: "he said to one, Go, and it went; to another, Come, and it came; to a third, Do this," and the commission was instantly executed. But to the formation of man (with reverential awe, and after the manner of men be it spoken) he seems more immediately to have addressed

addressed his power and wisdom. "Let us **Disc.**  
"make man;" All things are now ready; **I.**  
let the work of creation be compleated and  
crowned by the production of it's possessor  
and lord, who is to use, to enjoy, and to  
rule over it; "Let us make man."

The phraseology in which this *resolution*  
is couched is remarkable; "Let *us* make  
"man;" but the Old Testament furnishes  
more instances of a similar kind; "Behold,  
"man is become *like one of us*; Let *us* go  
"down, and confound their language;  
"Whom shall we send, and who will go  
"for *us*?" These plural forms, thus used  
by the Deity, demand our attention.

Three solutions of the question have  
been offered.

The first is that given by the Jews, who  
tell us that in these forms, God speaks of  
himself and his angels. But may we not  
ask, upon this occasion—"Who hath  
"known the mind of the Lord, or who  
hath

DISC. "hath been his counsellor?" With which  
 1. of the angels did he at any time vouchsafe  
 to share his works and his attributes? Could they have been his coadjutors in the work of creation, which he so often claims to himself, declaring he will not give the glory of it to another? Do we believe—do the Jews believe—did any body ever believe that man was made by angels, or made in the image and likeness of angels? Upon this opinion, therefore, we need not spend any more time. We know from whence it came, and for what end it was devised and propagated.

A second account of the matter is, that the king of heaven adopts the style employed by the kings of the earth, who frequently speak of themselves in the plural number, to express dignity and majesty. But doth it seem at all reasonable to imagine that God should borrow his way of speaking from a king, before man was created upon the earth? The contrary supposition would surely carry the air of more probability

probability with it, namely, that because the Deity originally used this mode of expression, therefore kings, considering themselves as his delegates and representatives, afterwards did the same. But however this might be the interpretation, if admitted, will not suffice to clear the point. For, as it has been judiciously observed, though a king and governor may say *us* and *we*, there is certainly no figure of speech, that will allow any single person to say, "One of *us*," when he speaks only of himself. It is a phrase that can have no meaning, unless there be more persons than one concerned.

Disc.

I.

What then should hinder us from accepting the third solution, given by the best expositors ancient and modern, and drawn from this consideration, that in the unity of the divine essence there is a plurality of persons coequal and coeternal, who might say, with truth and propriety, "Let *us* make man;" and, "Man is become *like one of us*?" Of such a personality revelation

DISC. revelation informs us; it is that upon

1. which the oeconomy of man's redemption is founded; his creation, as well as that of the world, is, in different passages, attributed to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; what more natural, therefore than that, at his production, this form of speech should be used by the divine persons? What more rational than to suppose, that a doctrine, so important to the human race, was communicated from the beginning, that men might know whom they worshipped, and how they ought to worship? What other good and sufficient reason can be given, why the name of God, in use among believers from the first, should likewise be in the *plural* number, connected with verbs and pronouns in the *singular* \*? It is true, we Christians, with the New Testament in our hands, may not want these arguments to prove the doctrine: but why should we overlook, or slight such very valuable evidence of it's having been revealed and received in the church of God,

מִן הַבְּרִיאָה \* בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים Gen. I. 1.

from

from the foundation of the world? It is a **Disc.**  
satisfaction, it is a comfort to reflect, that, 1.  
in this momentous article of our faith, we  
have patriarchs and prophets for our fa-  
thers; that they lived, and that they died  
in the belief of it; that the God<sup>b</sup> of Adam,  
of Noah, and of Abraham, is likewise our  
God; and that when we adore him in  
three persons, and give glory to the Father,  
to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, we do  
as it was done in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be.

Proceed we to consider the *materials*, of  
which man was composed.

“ The word of the Lord once came to  
“ the prophet Jeremiah<sup>c</sup>, saying, Arise,  
“ and go down to the potter’s house, and  
“ there I will cause thee to hear my words.  
“ Then he went down to the potter’s  
“ house, and behold he wrought a work  
“ on the wheel. And the word of the  
“ Lord came unto him, saying, Behold as

<sup>b</sup> אֱלֹהִים.

<sup>c</sup> Jer. xviii. 1.

“ the

**Disc.** "the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye  
i. "in mine hand."

A scene like this is presented to our imaginations by the words of Moses; "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground;" he moulded<sup>d</sup> or modelled him as a potter doth; we see the work, as it were, upon the wheel, rising and growing under the hands of the divine artificer!

The human body was not made of the celestial elements, light and air, but of the more gross terrestrial matter, as being designed to receive and communicate notices of terrestrial objects, by organs of a nature similar to them. In this instance, as in another since, God seemeth to have "chosen the base things of the world, to confound things honourable and mighty;" when of the dust of the ground he composed a frame, superior, in rank and dignity, to the heavens and all their hosts.

<sup>d</sup> יצא.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. i. 28.

They

They whose profession leads them to ex- DISC.  
amine the structure of this astonishing piece I.  
of mechanism, these men see the works of  
the Lord, and his wonders in the formation  
of the human body. A contemplation of  
it's parts, and their disposition, brought  
Galen upon his knees, in adoration of the  
wisdom with which the whole is con-  
trived; and incited him to challenge any  
one, upon an hundred years study, to tell,  
how any the least fibre or particle could  
have been more commodiously placed, ei-  
ther for use, or beauty. While the world  
shall last, genius and diligence will be pro-  
ducing fresh proofs, that we are "fearful-  
ly and wonderfully made;" that "mar-  
vellous are the works," and, above all,  
this capital work of the Almighty; and  
that the hand which made it must needs  
be verily and indeed divine.

Into the body of man, thus constructed;  
we learn from Moses, that God, "breathed  
the breath of life, and man became a  
living soul." The question here will be,  
Whether

**DISC.** Whether these words are intended to denote the rational and immortal soul, or the sensitive and animal life?

**I.**

They are certainly sometimes used in the lower of these acceptations. "Cease ye from man whose breath<sup>f</sup> is in his nostrils. All creatures in whose nostrils was the breath of life<sup>g</sup> died by the flood." By these texts it appears, that the terms *spirit* and *breath*<sup>h</sup> are used to signify that animal life, which is supported mechanically, by respiration through the nostrils.

But they are likewise used for the rational and immortal soul; witness those words of the psalmist, adopted by our Lord, when expiring on the cross; "Into thy hands I commend my spirit<sup>i</sup>." So again — "The spirit<sup>k</sup> shall return to God who gave it." And "The spirit of man<sup>l</sup> is the candle of the Lord."

נשמת ורוח<sup>h</sup>. נשמת רוח ה'ים<sup>g</sup>. נשמה<sup>f</sup>.  
נשמת אדם<sup>k</sup>. הדוח<sup>l</sup>. רוחי.

Spiritual

Spiritual essences and operations come DISC.  
not under the cognizance of those senses, I.  
which, during the present state of proba-  
tion, God has been pleased to make the  
inlets of our ideas. They must therefore  
be represented and described to us, in the  
way of comparison and analogy, by such  
language as is commonly styled *figurative*,  
or *metaphorical*. Of animal life, begun and  
continued by respiration, we have a proper  
and sufficient knowledge. From a contem-  
plation of that life, and the manner in  
which it is supported by the air, we are  
directed to frame our notions of an higher  
life, maintained by the influence of an  
higher principle. For this purpose, the  
terms which denote the former are bor-  
rowed to express the latter; and we find  
the words, translated *spirit*, and *breath*,  
sometimes used for one, and sometimes for  
the other.

But when we consider, that man, as  
other Scriptures do testify, has within him  
a rational soul, an immortal spirit, which,  
on the dissolution of the body, returns to

**Dis c.** God who gave it; that, in this original  
1. description of his formation, we may reasonably expect to find both parts of his composition mentioned; and that a personal act of the Deity, that of inspiring the breath of life, is recorded with regard to him, which is not said of the other creatures; we can hardly do otherwise than conclude, that the words were intended to denote not the animal life only, but also another life communicated with it, and represented by it; in a word, that man consisteth of a body so organized as to be sustained in life by the action of the material elements upon it, and a rational immortal soul supported, in a similar manner, by the influence of a superior and spiritual agency.

We had occasion to observe above, that when the knowledge of the Creator, furnished at the beginning by Revelation, had been lost in the heathen world, men paid to the works of his hands that adoration which was due to him. The material elements

ments were invested with divinity and im- DISC.  
mortality, and worshipped as gods. It may I.  
now be farther observed, that to the soul of  
man, considered as a portion of these ele-  
ments, was attributed the same divinity and  
immortality; and thus things natural were  
substituted in the place of things spiritual,  
a proper notion of which could not then  
be attained, for want of that instruction  
from above, which directs us how to trans-  
fer our ideas from one to the other, and to  
believe in the latter, as conceived through  
the medium of the former. So difficult  
has it ever been found, for the human  
mind, to pass the bounds of matter, and  
to explore the invifible wonders of the spi-  
ritual world. And whoever observes the  
progress of that scheme, which is once  
more set up against Revelation by some, in  
our own and a neighbouring nation, who  
affect the title of *philosophers*, in opposition  
to that of *Christians*, and whose abilities  
one cannot but lament to see employed in  
this manner, will perceive it's tendency to  
introduce *materialism*, and to carry us back

**DISC.** again to that state of darkness, from which  
I. it pleased the Father of lights, in mercy,  
 to deliver us by the Gospel of his Son.

But to return to the Mosaic account of man, of whose distinguishing excellencies we are taught to entertain the most exalted sentiments, when we are told, that he was made "in the *image* and likeness of God." For what more can be said of a creature, than that he is made after the similitude of his Creator?

As "God is a Spirit," the similitude here spoken of must be a spiritual similitude, and the subject to which it relates must be the spiritual part of man, his rational and immortal soul.

To discover wherein such image and likeness consisted what better method can we take, than to enquire, wherein consist that divine image and likeness, which, as the Scriptures of the New Testament inform us, were restored in human nature, through

through the redemption and grace of Disc. Christ, who was manifested for that purpose? The image restored was the image lost; and the image lost was that in which Adam was created.

I.

The expressions employed by the penmen of the New Testament plainly point out to us this method of proceeding. We read of the new man "which after God is *created*;"<sup>m</sup> and of man being "renewed after the image of him that *created* him;"<sup>n</sup> and the like. The use of the term *created* naturally refers us to man's first creation, and leads us to parallel that with his renovation, or new creation, by which he re-obtained those excellencies possessed at the beginning, but afterwards unhappily forfeited.

And what are these?—"Renewed in *knowledge*, after the image of him that *created* him—Put on the new man,

<sup>m</sup> Ephes. iv. 24.

<sup>n</sup> Coloss. iiii. 10.

DISC. "which after God is created in *righteous-*

1. *ness and true holiness, οσιωγητι της αληθειας,*

"the *holiness* of, or according to *truth*,"

the divine image, then, is to be found in the understanding, and the will; in the

understanding which knows the truth, and

in the will which loves it. For when the

understanding judges that to be true which

with God is true, the man is "renewed in

"knowledge after the image of him that

"created him; when the will loves the

truth, and all its affections move in the

pursuit and practice of it, the man is "new

"created after God in righteousness and ho-

"liness." This divine image is restored in

human nature by the word of Christ en-

lightening the understanding, and the grace

of Christ rectifying the will. These are, in

the end, to render man what he was at first

created, according to that passage in the

writings of King Solomon, which is the

shortest and best comment upon the words

of Moses—"God made man upright"—

the original word<sup>o</sup> signifies *straight, direct*;

ישר.

there

there was no error in his understanding, no **Disce**  
obliquity in his will. He who says this, **I.**  
says every thing. It is a full and compre-  
hensive account of man in his original  
state; nothing can be added to it, or taken  
from it.

Such, then, was Adam, in the day when  
God crowned him king in Eden, and in-  
vested him with sovereignty over the works  
of his hands, giving him "*dominion* over  
"the fish of the Sea, and over the fowl of  
"the air, and over the cattle, and over all  
"the earth, and over every creeping thing  
"that creepeth upon the earth."

It appears to have been the order of  
Providence, that while the flesh continued  
in subjection to the spirit, and man to God,  
so long the creatures should continue in  
subjection to man, as servants are subject  
to their lord and master. This original  
subjection we must suppose to have been  
universal and absolute. From the creatures  
man has much to learn, but nothing to

**Disc.** fear. If, to answer the purposes of crea-

**I.** tion, or to convey to his mind ideas of his invisible enemies, any were at that time wild and noxious, with regard to him they were tame and harmless. In perfect security he saw, he considered, he admired. But when he rebelled against his God, the creatures renounced their allegiance to him, and became in the hands of their common Creator instruments of his punishment.—“The beasts of the field” were no longer “at peace with him.” Yet in consequence of the new covenant and promise to redeem man and the world, we find it said after the flood—“The fear of you  
“and the dread of you shall be upon every  
“beast of the earth, and upon every fowl  
“of the air, upon all that moveth upon  
“the earth, and upon all the fishes of the  
“sea.” So far is the superiority of the human species still preserved, that “every  
“kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and things in the sea, is tamed,  
“and hath been tamed of mankind.” In

Gen. ix. 2.

James iii. 7.

some cases, for the sake of eminently holy Disc.  
persons, favoured by heaven on that ac- I.  
count, the instincts of the most savage and  
ravenous have been suspended? as when  
some of every kind assembled and lodged  
together in the ark, and when the mouths  
of the lions were stopped in the den of Ba-  
bylon, while the righteous and greatly be-  
loved Daniel was there. The Redeemer of  
the world endued his disciples with the  
original privilege——“ Behold I give you  
“ power to tread on serpents, and on scor-  
“ pions; and nothing shall by any means  
“ hurt you.” And agreeably to such pro-  
mise, St. Paul “ shook off the viper into  
“ the fire, and felt no harm.” The VIII<sup>th</sup>  
psalm is a beautiful representation of the  
extent of this privilege, as it was possessed,  
at the beginning, by the first Adam, and  
as it hath been since restored to the second  
——“ O Lord our Lord, how excellent is  
“ thy name in all the earth! Who hast  
“ set thy glory above the heavens. Out of

\* Luke x. 19.

\* Acts xxviii. 5.

DISC. "the mouth of babes and sucklings hast  
 I. "thou ordained strength, because of thine  
 "enemies, that thou mightest still the ene-  
 "my and the avenger. When I consider  
 "thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the  
 "moon and the stars which thou hast or-  
 "dained; What is man, that thou art  
 "mindful of him; and the son of man  
 "that thou visitest him? For thou hast  
 "made him a little lower than the angels,  
 "and hast crowned him with glory and  
 "honour. Thou madest him to have do-  
 "minion over the works of thy hands;  
 "thou hast put all things under his feet:  
 "all sheep and oxen, yea and the beasts of  
 "the field; the fowl of the air, and the  
 "fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth  
 "through the paths of the seas. O Lord  
 "our Lord, how excellent is thy name in  
 "all the earth!"

Let us indulge a few reflections on the foregoing particulars

The imagination naturally endeavours to  
 form

form some idea of the sensations that must **Disc.**  
have arisen in the mind of the first man, **1.**  
when, awaking into existence, with all his  
senses and faculties perfect, he beheld the  
glory and beauty of the new created world.  
Faded as we must suppose it's glory and it's  
beauty now to be, enough still remains, to  
excite continual wonder, praise, and ado-  
ration. Yet it is represented in the Scrip-  
tures of truth, as lying under a curse, as  
groaning and travelling in pain, and as lit-  
tle better than a prison, from which all,  
who are truly sensible of it's condition, and  
their own, wish and pray to be delivered,  
into the liberty of the Children of God.  
But if such be our prison, what notions  
are we led to form of those mansions,  
which our Lord is gone before to prepare  
for us, in his Father's house? Creation  
was finished in six days, and we read, that,  
“on the seventh, God rested from all his  
“work which he created and made.”  
But the transgression of man would not

\* Gen. 11. 2.

DISC. suffer him to rest. "My Father," says  
 I. the blessed Jesus, "worketh hitherto, and  
 "I work". Sin made it's way into the  
 first creation, and is gradually destroying it,  
 as a moth fretteth a garment—"Lift up  
 "your eyes to the heavens, and look upon  
 "the earth beneath; for the heavens shall  
 "vanish away like smoke, and the earth  
 "shall wax old like a garment, and they  
 "that dwell therein shall die in like man-  
 "ner". "But we, according to his pro-  
 "mise, look for new heavens, and a new  
 "earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness".  
 We read of one, who, in vision, "saw a  
 "new heaven and a new earth, for the  
 "first heaven and the first earth were passed  
 "away". When the new creation shall  
 be finished and prepared, an act of Omni-  
 potence will be exerted, similar to that  
 which passed at the formation of Adam.  
 The Lord God will again "form man out  
 "of the dust of the ground, and breathe  
 "into his nostrils the breath of life."

<sup>u</sup> John v. 17.

<sup>w</sup> Isai. li. 6.

<sup>x</sup> 2 Peter iii. 13.

<sup>y</sup> Rev. xxi. 1.

From his long sleep in the chamber of the **Disc.**  
grave, he will awake to behold the never **I.**  
fading glories of a world, which "will  
" have no need of the sun, neither of the  
" moon to shine in it, for the Lord God  
" and the Lamb," those brighter and inex-  
tinguishable luminaries, shall enlighten it  
for ever \*. The Almighty shall again with  
complacency survey the works of his hands,  
and pronounce every thing he has made to  
be " very good ;" he shall again rest on the  
seventh day ; the children of the resurrec-  
tion shall enter into his rest, and keep an  
eternal sabbath. Let us " comfort one  
" another with these words."

A view of the different materials of  
which man is composed, may teach us to  
form a proper estimate of him. He stands  
between the two worlds, the natural and  
the spiritual, and partakes of both. His  
body is material, but its inhabitant de-  
scends from another system. His soul, like

\* Rev. xxi. 23.

**DISC.** the world from which it comes, is immortal; but his body like the world to which  
I. it belongs, is frail and perishable. From  
 it's birth it contains in it the seeds and principles of dissolution, towards which it tends every day and hour, by the very means that nourish and maintain it, and which no art can protract beyond a certain term. In spite of precaution and medicine, "the evil days will come, and the years "draw nigh, when he shall say, I have no "pleasure in them." Pains and sorrows will succeed each other, as "the clouds "return after the rain," blackening the face of heaven, and darkening the sources of light and joy. The hands, those once active and vigorous "keepers of the house," grown paralytic, shall "tremble;" and "the strong men," those firm and able columns which supported it, shall "bow "themselves," and sink under the weight. The external "grinders" of the food, the teeth, "shall cease because they are few," and the work of mastication shall be imperfectly performed. Dim suffusion shall  
 veil

veil the organs of sight, "they that look  
"out of the windows shall be darkened."  
"The doors," or valves, "shall be shut in  
"the streets," or alleys of the body, when  
the digestive powers are weakened, and  
"the sound of the" internal "grinding is  
"low." Sleep, if it light upon the eye-  
lids of age, will quickly remove again, and  
"he will rise up at the time when the  
first "voice of the bird" proclaims the ap-  
proach of the morning. "All the daugh-  
"ters of music shall be brought low;" he  
will hear no more the voice of singing  
men, and singing women. Timidity and  
distrust will predominate, and he will be  
alarmed at every thing; "he shall be  
"afraid of that which is high, and fears  
"shall be in the way." As the early "al-  
"mond tree," when it flourishes in full  
blossom, his hoary head shall be conspicu-  
ous in the congregation, the sure prog-  
nostic not of spring, alas, but of winter;  
he who, like "the grasshopper," in the  
season of youth was so sprightly in his  
motions, now scarce able to crawl upon the  
earth,

Dise.

I.

DISC. earth, "shall be a burden" to himself, and;  
I. the organs of sense being vitiated and impaired, "desire" and appetite "shall fail." The spinal marrow, that "silver cord," with the infinite ramifications of the nerves, thence derived, will be relaxed, and lose it's tone; "and the golden bowl," the receptacle of the brain, from which it proceeds "shall be broken," The vessel, by which as a "pitcher," the blood is carried back to the heart for a fresh supply, "shall be broken at the fountain, and the "wheel," or instrument of circulation, which throws it forth again to the extremities of the body, "shall be broken at "the cistern\*."—When this highly finished piece of mechanism shall be thus disjointed and dissolved, "then shall the dust," of which it was framed, "return to the "earth as it was, and the spirit shall return "to God who gave it." Learn we from

\* See the Portrait of Old Age, in a Paraphrase on the six former verses of the XII<sup>th</sup> chapter of Ecclesiastes, by JOHN SMITH, M. D. of the COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS; reprinted in 1752 for E. WITHERS, at the Seven Stars, between the two Temple-Gates, Fleet-street.

hence

hence, to bestow on each part of our com- DISC.  
position that proportion of time and atten- I.  
tion, which, upon a due consideration of  
it's nature and importance, it shall appear  
to claim at our hands.

To stamp on man his own image, was the design of God in creating him; to restore that image, when lost, was the design of God in redeeming him. Could greater honour have been done to human nature? Never may the guilt be ours of debasing our nature and obliterating "this image and "supercription;" a species surely of treason against the majesty of heaven. Sloth will obscure the fair impresson; it's attendants, ignorance and vice, will destroy it. Let diligence therefore be appointed to watch over it, and to retouch, from time to time, the lines that are faded; till, the whole standing confessed in knowlege, righteousness, and true holiness, men may glorify our father which is in heaven, while they behold his resemblance upon earth. So shall we answer the ends of our creation

**Disc.** and redemption, and serve our generation  
**1.** in the most effectual manner. And though,  
 when this is done, we must close our eyes  
 in death, and sleep with our fathers; yet  
 the hour cometh, in which we shall open  
 them again, to “behold thy face, O God,  
 “in righteousness; we shall be satisfied,  
 “when we awake with thy likeness<sup>b</sup>.”

Was Adam invested with sovereignty  
 over the creatures? Observe we from hence,  
 that man was made to rule. Majestic in  
 his form, he was ordained to trample upon  
 earth, and aspire to heaven, which, with-  
 out putting a force upon nature, he cannot  
 but behold, and regard. In the original  
 subjection of the creatures we see what  
 ought to be that of every desire and appe-  
 tite, terrestrial and animal, to the ruling  
 principle within us. The subtlety of some  
 creatures, and the fierceness of others, now  
 exhibit to us the difficulty of subduing and  
 governing the passions, broken loose, like

<sup>b</sup> Ps. xvii. 15.

them,

them, from the dominion of their master ; DISC.  
insomuch, that the apostle, who asserts, that I.  
every creature may be, and has been tamed  
of man, yet says of one part of man, the  
tongue, " it is a deadly evil, which no  
" man can tame," meaning by his own  
powers. Through the redemption and  
grace which are by Christ Jesus, this do-  
minion, as well as the other, is restored,  
not only over our own passions, but over  
still more formidable opponents, the evil  
spirits in arms against us. For thus our  
Lord gave his disciples power not only over  
the natural " serpents and scorpions," but  
over some, whose venom is of a more malig-  
nant and fatal kind ; " over all the power  
" of THE ENEMY." The apostles returned,  
accordingly, crying out, " Lord, the very  
" DEVILS are subject unto us, through thy  
" name !" And we have a general promise,  
that, in our combats with them, God will  
give us victory, and bruise their leader, Sa-  
tan himself, under our feet. Our Redeemer  
is exalted above the heavens and human  
nature in the second Adam, restored to do-

**DISC.** minion over all the earth. And though, at  
I. present, the apostle's lot may be ours, to  
 "fight with beasts," with evil men, evil  
 passions and evil spirits, yet through God  
 we shall do great acts; it is he that shall  
 tread down those that rise up against us;  
 till finally triumphant over the last enemy,  
 and exalted to the eternal throne, we shall  
 view the earth beneath us, and the sun and  
 stars shall be dust under our feet.

## DISCOURSE II.

## THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

GEN. ii. 8.

*And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed.*

**I**N a preceding discourse some considerations were offered, tending to elucidate the particulars related by Moses concerning the origination of man; namely, the time of his formation; the resolution taken by the Deity on the occasion; the materials of which he was composed; the divine image in which he was created; and the dominion over the creatures with which he was invested.

DISC.  
II.

The words now read mark out the history of that habitation in which it pleased  
C 3 the

DISC. the Almighty to place him at the beginning, for the subject of our present enquiries. A subject not only curious, but highly interesting. For if Levi be said to have paid tithes to Melchizedek, as being in the loins of Abraham, at the time of that transaction; we may, in like manner, regard ourselves, as having taken possession of Eden; being in the loins of our ancestor, when he did so. And though it can afford but small comfort, to reflect upon the excellence of an inheritance which we have lost, it may inspire into us due sentiments of gratitude and love towards that blessed person who hath recovered it for us. And thus every consideration which enhances the value of the possession, will proportionably magnify the goodness of our great benefactor.

For these reasons, we sometimes, perhaps, find ourselves disposed to lament the conciseness and obscurity of that account which Moses hath left us of man's primeval estate in paradise. But when we recollect, that to this account we owe all the information

information we have, upon so important a DISC.  
point, it will become us to be thankful II.  
that we have been told so much, rather  
than to murmur because we have been told  
no more; and instead of lamenting the ob-  
scurity of the Mosaic account, to try whe-  
ther, by diligence and attention, that ob-  
scurity may not be, in part, dispelled. For  
though Moses hath only given us a com-  
pendious relation of facts (and facts of the  
utmost importance may be related in very  
few words) that relation is ratified and  
confirmed in the Scriptures of both Testa-  
ments, in which are found many references  
and allusions to it. By bringing these forth  
to view, and comparing them together, we  
may possibly be led to some agreeable spe-  
culations concerning the situation of Adam  
in the Garden of Eden, the nature of his  
employment, and the felicity he there ex-  
perienced.

On a subject so remote, and confessedly  
difficult, demonstration will not be expect-  
ed. Much of what is advanced, must be  
advanced rather as probable, than certain;

**DISC.** and where there is little positive information, the candor so often experienced will accept of such notices as can be obtained by inference and deduction.

When we think of Paradise, we think of it as the seat of delight. The name EDEN authorizes us so to do. It signifies PLEASURE; and the idea of pleasure is inseparable from that of a Garden, where man still seeks after lost happiness, and where, perhaps, a good man finds the nearest resemblance of it, which this world affords. "What is requisite," exclaims a great and original genius, "to make a wise and a happy man, but reflection and peace? And both are the natural growth of a Garden. A Garden to the virtuous is a Paradise still extant; a Paradise unlost." The culture of a Garden, as it was the first employment of man, so it is that, to which the most eminent persons in different ages have retired, from the camp and the cabinet, to pass the interval between a life of action, and a removal hence. When old

<sup>c</sup> Dr. YOUNG—*Centaur not fabulous*. P. 61.

Dioclesian

Dioclesian was invited from his retreat, to resume the purple which he had laid down some years before, "Ah," said he, "could you but see those fruits and herbs of mine own raising at Salona, you would never talk to me of empire!" An accomplished statesman of our own country, who spent the latter part of his life in this manner, hath so well described the advantages of it, that it would be injustice to communicate his ideas in any words but his own. "No other sort of abode," says he, "seems to contribute so much both to the tranquillity of mind, and indolence of body. The sweetness of the air, the pleasantness of the smell, the verdure of plants, the cleanness and lightness of food, the exercise of working or walking; but, above all, the exemption from care and solicitude, seem equally to favour and improve both contemplation and health, the enjoyment of sense and imagination, and thereby the quiet and ease both of body and mind. A Garden has been the inclination of kings, and  
" the

Disc.

II.

DISC. "the choice of philosophers; the common  
 II. "favourite of public and private men; the  
 "pleasure of the greatest, and the care of  
 "the meanest; an employment and a pos-  
 "session, for which no man is too high,  
 "nor too low. If we believe the Scrip-  
 "tures," concludes he, "we must allow,  
 "that God Almighty esteemed the life of  
 "man in a Garden the happiest he could  
 "give him; or else, he would not have  
 "placed Adam in that of Eden<sup>a</sup>."

The Garden of Eden had, doubtless, all the perfection it could receive from the hands of Him, who ordained it to be the mansion of his favourite creature. We may reasonably presume it to have been the earth in miniature, and to have contained specimens of all natural productions, as they appeared, without blemish, in an un-fallen world; and these disposed in admirable order, for the purposes intended. And it may be observed, that when, in after times, the penmen of the Scriptures have

<sup>a</sup> SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE, *Gardens of Epicurus*.

occasion to describe any remarkable degree of fertility and beauty, of grandeur and magnificence, they refer us to the Garden of Eden. “He beheld all the plain well watered as the Garden of the Lord.” “The land was as the Garden of Eden before them, but behind them a desolate wilderness<sup>f</sup>.” The prophet Ezekiel, at the command of God, for an admonition to Pharaoh, thus portrays the pride of the Assyrian empire, under the splendid and majestic imagery afforded by vegetation in its most flourishing state. “The Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon, fair of branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature, and his top was among the thick boughs. The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high, with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers to all the trees in the field. Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long, because of the multitude of waters when

Disc.

II.

<sup>e</sup> Gen. xiii. 10.

<sup>f</sup> Joel ii. 3.

“ he

DISC. "shot forth.—Thus was he fair in his  
 II. "greatness, and in the length of his  
 "branches: for his root was by great wa-  
 "ters. The cedars in the Garden of God  
 "could not hide him, nor was any tree in  
 "the Garden of God like unto him in his  
 "beauty. I have made him fair by the  
 "multitude of his branches; so that all  
 "the trees of Eden, that were in the Gar-  
 "den of God envied him<sup>s</sup>." After having  
 related the fall of his towering and exten-  
 sive empire, the prophet makes the appli-  
 cation to the king of Egypt; "To whom  
 "art thou thus like, in glory and great-  
 "ness, among the trees of Eden? Yet  
 "shalt thou be brought down with the  
 "trees of Eden, to the lower parts of the  
 "earth." In another place we find the  
 following ironical address to the King of  
 Tyre as having attempted to rival the true  
 God, and the glories of his Paradise. "Thou  
 "sealest up the sum full of wisdom, and  
 "perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in  
 "Eden in the Garden of God; every pre-  
 "cious stone was thy covering—thou wast

<sup>s</sup> Ezek. xxxi. 3, &c.

“ upon the holy mountain of God—thou Disc.  
“ wast perfect in thy ways, from the day 11.  
“ that thou wast created, until iniquity  
“ was found in thee—Thine heart was  
“ lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast  
“ corrupted thy wisdom, by reason of thy  
“ brightness: I will cast thee to the ground  
“ I will lay thee before kings, that they  
“ may behold thee<sup>h</sup>.”

Traditions and traces of this original Garden seem to have gone forth into all the earth, though as an elegant writer justly observes, “ they must be expected to  
“ have grown fainter and fainter in every  
“ transfusion from one people to another.  
“ The Romans probably derived their notion of it, expressed in the gardens of  
“ Flora, from the Greeks, among whom  
“ this idea seems to have been shadowed  
“ out under the stories of the gardens of  
“ Alcinous. In Africa they had the gardens of the Hesperides, and in the east  
“ those of Adonis. The term of *Horti*  
“ *Adonides* was used by the ancients to fig-

<sup>h</sup> Ezek, xxviii. 12, &c.

“ nify

DISC. “nify gardens of pleasure, which answers  
 II. “strangely to the very name of Paradise,  
 “or the Garden of *Eden*<sup>1</sup>.” In the writings of the poets, who have lavished all the powers of genius and the charms of verse upon the subject, these and the like counterfeit or secondary paradises, the copies of the true, will live and bloom, so long as the world itself shall endure.

It hath been already suggested, that a Garden is calculated no less for the improvement of the mind, than for the exercise of the body; and we cannot doubt, but that peculiar care would be taken of that most important end, in the disposition of the Garden of Eden.

From the situation and circumstances of Adam, it should not seem probable, that an all wise and all gracious Creator would leave him in that state of ignorance in which, since the days of Faustus Socinus, it hath been but too much the fashion to

<sup>1</sup> SPENCE'S *Polymetis* cited in *Letters on Mythology*, P. 126.

represent

represent him. For may we not argue in **Disc.**  
some such manner as the following? **II.**  

---

If so fair a world was created for the use and satisfaction of his terrestrial part, formed out of the dust, can we imagine, that the better part, the immortal spirit from above, the inhabitant of the fleshly tabernacle prepared for it, should be left in a state of destitution and desolation, unprovided with wisdom, it's food, it's support, and it's delight?

If men, since the fall, and labouring under all the disadvantages occasioned by it, have been enabled to make those attainments in knowledge, which they certainly have made; and we find the understanding of a Solomon replete with every species of wisdom, human and divine; can we conceive ignorance to have been the characteristic of the first formed father of the world, created with all his powers and faculties complete and perfect, and living under the immediate tuition of God?

If

**Disc.** " If upon the trial of Adam, as the head  
II. and representative of mankind, their fate,  
 as well as his own, both in time and eternity, was to depend, can we ever think, his Maker would expose him to such a trial, with a mind not better informed, than that of a child or an idiot?

If redemption restored what was lost by the fall and the second Adam was a counterpart of the first, must we not conceive Adam to have once been what man is, when restored by grace to " the image of " God in wisdom and holiness?" And does not he, who degrades the character of the *Son of God*\* in Paradise degrade in proportion the character of that other *Son of God*, and the redemption and restoration which are by him?

Our first father differed from all his descendants in this particular, that he was not to attain the use of his understanding by a gradual process from infancy, but

\* Luke III. 38.—" Which was the son of Adam, which " was the son of God."

came into being in full stature and vigour DISC.  
 of mind as well as body. He found crea- II.  
 tion likewise in it's prime. It was morn-  
 ing with man and the world.

We are not certain with regard to the time allowed him, to make his observations upon the different objects, with which he found himself surrounded; but it should seem, either that sufficient time was allowed him for that end, or that he was enabled, in some extraordinary manner, to pervade their essences, and discover their properties. For we are informed, that God brought the creatures to him, that he might impose upon them suitable names; a work which in the opinion of Plato<sup>1</sup>, must be ascribed to God himself. The use and intent of names is to express the natures of the things named; and in the knowlege of those natures, at the beginning, God who made them, must have been man's instructor. It is not likely, that without such an instructor, men could

<sup>1</sup> Τα πρῶτα ονοματα οἱ Θεοῖ ἰδεναι.— In Cratylus.

DISC. ever have formed a language at all; since  
 II. it is a task which requires much thought  
 and the great masters of reason seem to be  
 agreed that without language, we cannot  
 think to any purpose. However that may  
 be, from the original imposition of names  
 by our first parent we cannot but infer,  
 that his knowlege of things natural must  
 have been very eminent and extensive; not  
 inferior we may suppose, to that of his  
 descendant king Solomon, who “ spake of  
 “ trees, from the cedar to the hyssop, and  
 “ of beasts, and fowl, and creeping things  
 “ and fishes.” It is therefore probable,  
 that Plato asserted no more than the truth,  
 when he asserted, according to the tradi-  
 tions he had gleaned up in Egypt and the  
 east, that the first man was of all men  
 Φιλοσοφωτατος, the greatest philosopher.

As man was made for the contemplation  
 of God here, and for the enjoyment of  
 him hereafter, we cannot imagine, that  
 his knowlege would terminate on earth,  
 though it took it's rise there. Like the  
 patriarch's ladder, it's foot was on earth,  
 but

but its top, doubtless reached to heaven. **DISC.**  
By it the mind ascended from the creatures **II.**  
to the Creator, and descended from the  
Creator to the creatures. It was the golden chain, which connected matter and spirit, preserving a communication between the two worlds.

That God had revealed and made himself known to Adam, appears from the circumstances related; namely, that he took him, and put him into the garden of Eden; that he conversed with him, and communicated a law, to be by him observed; that he caused the creatures to come before him, and brought Eve to him. In these transactions, God probably assumed some visible appearance; because, otherwise than by such assumed appearance, no man, while in the body, can see God. And we find, by what passed after the fatal transgression, that “the voice or sound of the Lord God walking in the garden,” was a voice or sound to which Adam had been accustomed, though guilt for the first time had made him afraid of it.

DISC. If there was at the beginning, this familiar intercourse between Jehovah and  
II. Adam, and he vouchsafed to converse with him as he afterwards did with Moses, “as  
“ a man converseth with his friend,” there can be no reasonable doubt, but that he instructed him, as far as was necessary, in the knowledge of his Maker, of his own spiritual and immortal part, of the adversary he had to encounter, of the consequences to which disobedience would subject him, and of those invisible glories, a participation of which was to be the reward of his obedience.

When God, in after times, selected a peculiar people to be his church and heritage to receive the law from his mouth, and to be the guardians of his promises, he “chose one place to place his name  
“ there;” to be the place of his residence, where he appeared and was consulted. He gave directions for the construction of a temple, or house, in a particular manner appropriated to him, and called his; which  
though

though composed of worldly elements, was so framed as to exhibit an apt resemblance, model, or pattern of heavenly things; to serve as a school for instruction, as a sanctuary for devotion. Might not the Garden of Eden be a kind of temple, or sanctuary, to Adam; a place chosen for the residence and appearance of God; a place designed to represent and give him ideas of heavenly things; a place sacred to contemplation and devotion? Something of this sort seems to be intimated by the account we have of the garden in the second chapter of Genesis, and to be confirmed by the references and allusions to it, in other parts of the Scriptures.

DISC.

II.

With this view we may observe, that though Paradise was created with the rest of the world, yet we are informed, the hand of God, was in a more especial manner, employed in preparing this place for the habitation of man. "The Lord God  
"planted a Garden eastward in Eden. And  
"out of the ground the Lord God made

DISC. "to grow every tree that is pleasant to the

II. "light, and good for food. And a river  
"went out of Eden, to water the Garden;  
"and from thence it was parted, and be-  
"came into four heads." Thus the great  
architect of the universe, he who, in the  
language of the apostle, "built all things,"  
is described as selecting, disposing, and  
adorning this wonderful and happy spot,  
wherein was to be placed the creature made  
after his own image and likeness, but a lit-  
tle lower than the angels. Does not this  
circumstance suggest to us, that something  
more was intended, than what generally  
enters into our idea of a Garden?

Whenever the Garden of Eden is men-  
tioned in the Scriptures, it is called "the  
"Garden of God," or "the Garden of  
"the Lord;" expressions which denote  
some peculiar designation of it to sacred  
purposes, some appropriation to God and  
his service, as is confessedly the case with  
many similar phrases; such as "house of  
"God, altar of God, man of God," and  
the

the like; all implying, that the persons Disc.  
and things spoken of were consecrated to 11.  
him, and set apart for a religious use.

When it is said, “The Lord God took  
“the man, and put him into the Garden of  
“Eden, to DRESS it, and to KEEP it,”  
the words undoubtedly direct us to con-  
ceive of it, as a place for the exercise of  
the body. We readily acquiesce in this,  
as the truth, but not as the whole truth;  
it being difficult to imagine, that so noble  
a creature, the Lord of the world, should  
have no other, or higher employment.  
Much more satisfaction will be found in  
supposing, that our first parents, while thus  
employed, like the priests under the law,  
while they ministered in the temple, were  
led to contemplations of a more exalted  
nature, “serving to the example and sha-  
“dow of heavenly things.” The powers  
of the body and the faculties of the mind  
might be set to work at the same time,  
by the same objects. And it is well known,  
that the words here used<sup>m</sup>, do as frequent-

שומר and עבד<sup>m</sup>.

DISC. ly denote mental as corporeal operations;  
 II. and under the ideas of DRESSING and  
 ——— KEEPING the sacred Garden, may fairly  
 imply the CULTIVATION and OBSERVA-  
 TION of such religious truths, as were  
 pointed out by the external signs and sacra-  
 ments, which Paradise contained.

That some of the objects in Eden were of a sacramental nature, we can hardly doubt, when we read of “the tree of knowledge,” and “the tree of life.” The fruit of a material tree could not, by any virtue inherent in it, convey “the knowledge of good and evil,” or cause that, by eating it, a man should “live for ever.” But such fruit might be ordained as a sacrament, upon the participation of which, certain spiritual effects should follow. This is entirely conformable to reason, to the nature of man, and of religion.

It is remarkable, that, in the earliest ages, a custom should be found to prevail, both among the people of God, and idolaters,  
 of

of setting apart and consecrating gardens and groves, for the purpose of religious worship. Thus Abraham, we are told, "planted a tree, or grove, at Beersheba, "and called on the name of the ever-lasting God". The worshippers of false Gods are described, in the writings of the prophets, as "sacrificing in gardens," as "purifying themselves in gardens, behind "one tree in the midst;" and it is foretold, that they should be "ashamed for the oaks "which they had desired, and confounded "for the gardens which they had chosen". A surprising uniformity in this point may be traced through all the different periods of idolatry, as subsisting among the Canaanites, the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. Groves were dedicated to the Gods, and particular species of trees were sacred to particular deities. The same usage prevailed among the Druids, in these parts of the world. And to this day, the ailes of our Gothic churches and

Disc.

11.

\* Gen. xxi. 33.

\* Isai. lxxv. 3. lxxvi. 17.

cathedrals

DISC. cathedrals are evidently built in imitation  
 II. of those arched groves, which of old supplied the place of temples. It is not, therefore without reason, that the author of a learned dissertation on the subject makes the following remark—"These were the  
 " hallowed fanes of the ancients, in which  
 " they performed divine worship. And indeed, if we would trace up this rite  
 " to it's origin, we must have recourse to  
 " the true God himself, who instituted in  
 " Paradise a sacred garden, or grove; ordained Adam to be the high priest of it,  
 " and consecrated in it two trees, for a  
 " public testimony of religion."

But upon the supposition now made, that the garden of Eden served as a kind of Temple for our first parents, might we not expect to find some resemblance of it in the tabernacle and temple afterwards erected, by the appointment of God, for his residence in the midst of his people Israel? The question is by no means absurd, especially if we recollect, that it was the design

sign of the Mosaic sanctuary, with its apparatus, to prefigure the restoration of those spiritual blessings, which were forfeited and lost by the transgression in Paradise. Let us therefore enquire what satisfaction the Scriptures will afford us upon this point.

DISC.

II.

---

The principal objects in the Garden of Eden, with which Revelation has brought us acquainted, are the plantations of trees, and the rivers of water, by which those plantations were nourished and supported in glory and beauty. Was there any thing of this sort in or about the tabernacle and temple?

With regard to the plantations, two passages in the psalms incline us to think, there were such in the courts of the Jewish sanctuary, as well as in that of Eden; “I  
“ am like a green olive tree in the house of  
“ God”. The righteous shall flourish like  
“ a palm-tree, he shall grow like a cedar  
“ in Lebanon. Those that be planted in

P Ps. LIII. 8.

“ the

DISC. "the house of the Lord, shall flourish in  
 II. "the courts of our God. They shall bring  
 — "forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat  
 "and flourishing<sup>a</sup>." These texts seem to  
 suppose the real existence of such planta-  
 tions, and, at the same time, to intimate  
 the end and design of them, namely, to  
 represent the progress and improvement of  
 the faithful in virtue, through the influence  
 of the divine favour. The same pleasing  
 and expressive image is employed to the  
 same purpose, in the first psalm—"He  
 "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers  
 "of water, that bringeth forth his fruit  
 "in his season; his leaf also shall not  
 "wither, and whatever he doth shall pros-  
 "per."

As to the rivers of water, which sup-  
 plied and refreshed the Garden of Eden  
 and all its productions, we meet with  
 something analogous to them, both in the  
 tabernacle and temple.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xcii. 12.

During

During the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan, the camp in general and the sacred tabernacle in particular were supplied with water in a miraculous manner, not only at the time when Moses smote the rock, but the same supply accompanied them afterwards—"They drank of that rock," that is, the water of that rock, "which followed them." "He led thee (says Moses) through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who made water to flow for thee out of the rock of flint." And these waters, like those in Eden, were of a sacramental nature. "They did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ." How lively a representation of that heavenly grace, which comforts our weary spirits, and enables us to accomplish our journey through the wilderness of life!

† Deut. viii. 15.

\* 1 Cor. x. 4.

- DISC. If from the tabernacle we proceed to the
- II. temple, we are there presented with the  
sacred streams of Siloah, breaking forth  
and flowing from the mount of God. In  
Ezekiel's famous vision of the new temple,  
there is a wonderful description, founded  
on the real situation of things at mount  
Sion, explaining their signification, and  
unavoidably carrying our thoughts back to  
the waters and plantations of the original  
sanctuary in Eden. "Afterward he brought  
"me again unto the door of the house,  
"and behold waters issued out from under  
"the threshold of the house eastward.—  
"Then said he to me, These waters issue  
"out toward the east country, and go  
"down into the desert, and go into the  
"sea: which being brought forth into the  
"sea, the waters shall be healed. And it  
"shall come to pass, that every thing that  
"liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the  
"river shall come, shall live—And by the  
"river upon the bank thereof, on this  
"side, and on that side, shall grow all trees  
"for meat, whose leaf shall not fade; nei-  
"ther

“ ther shall the fruit thereof be consumed: **Disc.**  
“ it shall bring forth new fruit according **II.**  
“ to it's months, because their waters issued  
“ out of the sanctuary; and the fruit there-  
“ of shall be for meat, and the leaves  
“ thereof for medicine ‘.”

When the prophets have occasion to foretel the great and marvellous change to be effected in the moral world, under the evangelical dispensation, they frequently borrow their ideas and expressions from the history of that garden, in which innocence and felicity once dwelt together, and which they represent as again springing up and blooming in the wilderness. Of the many passages which occur, two or three only shall be recited. “ The Lord will com-  
“ fort Sion, he will comfort all her waste  
“ places; he will make her wilderness like  
“ Eden, and her desert like the Garden of  
“ the Lord: joy and gladness shall be  
“ found therein, thanksgiving and the  
“ voice of melody”;” such joy and glad-

‘ Ezek. XLVII. 1, et seq.

“ Isai. LI. 3.

DISC. nefs, fuch thanksgiving and melody, at the  
 II. restitution of all things, as were at their  
 first creation, when "God saw every thing  
 " he had made, and behold, it was very  
 " good;" when "the morning stars sang  
 " together, and all the sons of God shouted  
 " for joy."—"When the poor and needy  
 " seek water, and there is none, and their  
 " tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will  
 " hear them, I the God of Israel will not  
 " forsake them. I will open rivers in high  
 " places, and fountains in the midst of the  
 " vallies; I will make the wilderness a  
 " pool of water, and the dry land springs  
 " of water. I will plant in the wilderness  
 " the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myr-  
 " tle, and the oil tree; I will set in the  
 " desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the  
 " box tree together: that they may see,  
 " and know, and consider, and understand  
 " together, that the hand of the Lord hath  
 " done this, and the holy One of Israel  
 " hath created it." "The wilderness and  
 " the solitary place shall be glad for them,

" Isai. xli. 17.

" and

“and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom Disc.  
 “as the rose: It shall blossom abundantly, 11.  
 “and rejoice even with joy and singing;  
 “the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto  
 “it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon:  
 “they shall see the glory of the Lord, and  
 “the excellency of our God.”

At the time appointed, these predictions received their accomplishment. Men “saw  
 “the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.” By the death and resurrection of the Redeemer, lost Paradise was regained; and it’s inestimable blessings, wisdom, righteousness and holiness, are now to be found and enjoyed in the Christian church. But as men are still men, and not angels, those blessings, are still represented and conveyed by sacramental symbols, analogous to the original ones in Eden. From the sacred font flows the water of life, to purify, to refresh, to comfort; “a river goes out of Eden, to water, “the garden,” and to “baptize all na-

\* *Isai. xxxv. 1.*

DISC. "tions;" while the eucharist answers to  
 11. the fruit of the tree of life : at the holy  
 table, we may now " put forth our hands,  
 " and take, and eat, and live for ever."

Let us go one step farther, and consider the state of things, in the *heavenly* kingdom of our Lord. There, it is true, all figures and shadows, symbols and sacraments, shall be no more, because faith will there be lost in vision, and we shall " know even as we are known." But in the mean time, till we attain that perfect consummation, was any person admitted to a sight of heaven, and the wonders that are therein, he could no otherwise describe them to us, who are yet in the body, than by the way of picture and similitude. This was the case of St. Paul. In a divine ecstasy, he had been caught up, and made to see and hear things, which he could not impart to others on account of their incapacity to receive them. What then does he? He refers us to the habitation of our first parents, for a general and comparative idea

idea of them. "I knew a man (says he) Disc.  
"who was caught up into Paradise." Our II.  
Lord, giving the penitent thief to understand, that his sorrows would soon be at an end, and he should pass, with his Saviour, into a place of rest and joy, uses the same expression—"This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." The beloved disciple, who was frequently in the spirit translated to those celestial mansions which Christ is gone to prepare for us, gives a more particular and extended description of them. But how? By bringing to our view all Eden, its waters and plantations, together with those seen by Ezekiel, in his vision of the new temple. "He shewed me a pure  
"river of water of life, clear as crystal,  
"proceeding out of the throne of God,  
"and of the Lamb.—And of either side  
"of the river was there the tree of life,  
"which bare twelve manner of fruits, and  
"yielded her fruit every month; and the  
"leaves of the tree were for the healing of  
"the nations.—To him that overcometh  
"will I give to eat of the tree of life,

DISC. "which is in the midst of the Paradise

II.

"of God.—Blessed are they that do his  
 "commandments, that they may have  
 "right to the tree of life—And the spirit  
 "and the bride say, Come. And let him  
 "that heareth say, Come. And let him  
 "that is athirst come; and whosoever will  
 "let him take the waters of life freely."

In these passages, the divine scenery is evidently borrowed from objects once really existing in the terrestrial Paradise, and employed to aid our conceptions, in apprehending celestial glories. If, therefore, we are taught, that heaven resembles the Garden of Eden, it seems fair and reasonable to conclude, that the Garden of Eden resembled heaven, and was, from the beginning, intended so to do; that, like the temple under the law, and the church under the Gospel, it was, to it's happy possessors, a place chosen for the residence of God; a place designed to represent and furnish them with ideas of heavenly things; a place sacred to contemplation and devotion; in one word, that it was the primi-

tive

tive temple and church, formed and consecrated for the use of man, in his state of innocence. There, undisturbed by care, and as yet unassailed by temptation, all his faculties perfect, and his appetites in subjection, he walked with God, as a man walketh with his friend, and enjoyed communion with heaven, though his abode was upon earth. He studied the works of God, as they came fresh from the hands of the workmaster, and in the creation, as in a glass, he was taught to behold the glories of the Creator. Trained, in the school of Eden, by the material elements of a visible world to the knowlege of one that is immaterial and invisible, he found himself excited by the beauty of the picture, to aspire after the transcendent excellence of the divine original. This sacred Garden the first Adam by transgression lost; but all the blessings, signified and represented by it, have been, through the second Adam, restored to his posterity. In our stead, he subjected himself to the vengeance of "the flaming sword," and re-

Disc.

II.

DISC. gained for us an entrance into Eden. For,  
II. "When he overcame the sharpness of  
"death, he opened the kingdom of heaven  
"to all believers." He is himself "the  
"Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise  
"of God;" and, by the effusion of his  
Spirit, he gives us to drink "rivers of  
"living water." In his church here be-  
low, he has all along communicated, and  
still communicates his gifts, by external  
sacraments, which serve at once as signs, as  
means, and as pledges: but, admitted to  
the church above, we shall see, and taste  
them, as they are. "Thou," O Lord Jesu,  
"shall shew us," for thou only canst now  
shew us "the path of LIFE," the "way to  
"the tree of life," and introduce us to the  
truth and substance of all that was sha-  
dowed out by the blissful scenes of Eden;  
for "in thy presence is the fulness of JOY,  
"and at thy right hand there are PLEA-  
"SURES for evermore."

## DISCOURSE III.

## THE TREE OF LIFE.

GEN. ii. Part of verse 9.

*The Tree of Life also in the midst of the  
Garden.*

SOME arguments were offered upon a Disc.  
former occasion, tending to prove, that III.  
the Garden of Eden, laid out and planted  
by the hand of the Almighty, for the habitation of our first parents, in a state of innocence and felicity, was of a figurative and sacramental nature; that, like the temple under the law, and the church under the Gospel, it was, to it's happy possessors, a place chosen for the residence of God; a place designed to represent, and furnish them with ideas of heavenly things; a place sacred to contemplation and devotion.

DISC. Among the objects presented to us, there  
 III. is one, which, though then taken into the  
 ——— general account with the rest, may seem to  
 claim a more particular attention. It stands  
 conspicuous in the Mosaic description, the  
 capital figure in that beautiful piece. It is  
 said to have been placed in the centre of  
 Eden, like the sun of the little system,  
 and bears a name sufficiently calculated to  
 awaken curiosity. The inspired historian  
 having informed us, that “the Lord God  
 “caused to grow out of the ground every  
 “tree that was pleasant to the sight, and  
 “good for food;” every thing, in the ve-  
 getable way either useful or ornamental;  
 adds — “The Tree of Life also in the  
 “midst of the garden.”

Life, we know, as it relates to man, is  
 twofold; that of the body, and that of the  
 soul; animal and spiritual; temporal and  
 eternal. Each requires to be supported by  
 a nutriment adapted to it's nature, and sup-  
 plied by something external to itself. The  
 food of the body is, like the body, ma-  
 terial,

terial, and cometh out of the earth; the food of the soul is, like the soul, spiritual, and cometh down from heaven. The Tree of Life was, doubtless, a material tree, producing material fruit, proper, as such, for the nourishment of the body. The question will be, whether it was intended to be eaten, in common for that end alone; or whether it was not rather set apart, to be partaken of, at a certain time, or times, as a symbol, or sacrament of that celestial principle, which nourishes the soul unto immortality; meaning, by that term, not a natural immortality, or bare existence, but that divine, spiritual, eternal life, which was lost by the fall, and the restitution of which is now "the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord,"

If it be supposed, that the Tree of Life was designed solely for the support of the body of man, there will appear no reason for its being distinguished, as it is by its appellation, from the other trees of the garden, which were all, in that sense, equally

DISC. equally *trees of life*, being, as we are told,

III. good for food." And indeed, the matter seems to be clearly determined otherwise, by the twenty-second verse of the third chapter, where we find fallen man excluded from Paradise, "lest he should put forth  
" his hand, and take also of the fruit of  
" the Tree of Life, and eat, and live FOR  
" EVER<sup>a</sup>." Immortality, therefore, was to have been obtained, according to God's original appointment, by eating the fruit of the Tree of Life; not surely, as the Jews idly talk, by any medicinal quality, or virtue, preserving the eater from sickness and death, neither of which, by the way, was in the world, till introduced by sin. No; the thing speaks itself. A material tree could only confer eternal life as a divinely instituted symbol, or sacrament; as, "an outward visible sign of an inward  
" spiritual grace, given to Adam, as a  
" means whereby he was to receive the  
" same, and a pledge to assure him there-  
" of." Hereby he would be continually

<sup>a</sup> לעולם.

reminded of the truth communicated to DISC.  
him, without all doubt, from the begin- III.  
ning; that there was another and a better  
life than that led by him in the terrestrial  
and figurative Paradise; a life, on which  
he was to set his affections, and to which  
he was to look, as the end, the reward,  
the crown of his obedience; a life, sup-  
ported, as it was given, by emanation from  
that Being, who only hath life in himself,  
and is the fountain, from which, in various  
ways, it flows to all his creatures. Of  
Him, as the glorious sun of the intellectual  
world, and of his gracious gift, streaming,  
like light through the heavens, to enliven  
and bless the spiritual system, the Tree of  
Life, with it's fruit, in the midst of Eden,  
is apprehended to have been ordained, as  
an instructive and comfortable symbol; that  
so a memorial of his abundant goodness  
might be shewn upon earth, and new crea-  
ted man might sing of his righteousness.

The sacramental designation of the Tree  
of Life in Paradise may be farther evinced,  
perhaps,

DISC. perhaps, by a passage or two in the book of  
 III. St. John's Revelation. "To him that over-  
 — " cometh," says the captain of our salva-  
 tion, " will I give to eat of the Tree of  
 " Life, which is in the midst of the Para-  
 " dise of God<sup>b</sup>." And again — " Blessed  
 " are they that do his commandments,  
 " that they may have right to the Tree of  
 " Life<sup>c</sup>." By " eating of the Tree of Life  
 " in the Paradise of God," is here evi-  
 dently meant a participation of eternal life  
 with God in heaven. Of this eternal life  
 the faithful followers of their great leader  
 are to be put in possession, as the reward of  
 their labours, when those labours shall have  
 been accomplished; when they shall have  
 walked to the end of their journey in the  
 path of Christ's commandments, and shall  
 have finally overcome their spiritual ene-  
 mies. May we not therefore, by parity of  
 reason, infer from hence the signification  
 and intent of the Tree of Life in Eden?  
 By means of that sacrament, had Adam  
 gone happily through his probation, and

<sup>b</sup> Rev. ii. 7.

<sup>c</sup> Rev. xxii. 14.

persevered

persevered in obedience unto the end, he Disc.  
would have been admitted, in the kingdom III.  
of heaven, to that state of eternal life with  
God, for which he was always designed,  
and of which Paradise was the earthly re-  
semblance. He would have been removed  
from the shadows of this world to the rea-  
lities of a better. His removal must have  
differed, in the manner of it, from that  
of which we now live, or ought to live,  
in expectation. Without sin, death could  
have had no power over him. He would  
have been translated alive, as Enoch and  
Elijah, for particular purposes, afterwards  
were. The change would have been  
wrought in him at once, as it was in them,  
and as it will be in those, who shall be  
found alive, at the coming of our Lord to  
judgment.

When transgression had subjected Adam  
to a sentence of condemnation, the case  
was altered. Glory and immortality could  
no longer be obtained upon the terms of  
the first covenant, now broken and void.

The

**DISC.** The very attempt became criminal. Man  
III. was to be put under a new covenant, and  
 in a new course of trial. He was to suffer  
 in the flesh for sin, and to pay the penalty  
 of death. But, through the merits of a  
 surety, that death was to be made the gate  
 of immortality. By faith he was to ac-  
 quire, upon the mediatorial plan, a fresh  
 right or power to eat of the Tree of Life,  
 and live for ever, after the resurrection from  
 the dead, with his propitiated and recon-  
 ciled Maker. In mercy, therefore, he was  
 excluded from the garden of Eden, and  
 from the original symbol of that eternal  
 life, which was now to be sought after by  
 other means, and represented by other sa-  
 craments. He was sent forth into the  
 world, to pass his time in toil, pain, and  
 sorrow; in mourning, contrition, and pe-  
 nance; till death should set him free, and  
 introduce him to the joys purchased and  
 prepared for him by that blessed person,  
 “in whom is Life, and the Life is the  
 “light of men<sup>d</sup>.” The same divine per-

<sup>d</sup> John i. 4.

son was always the source of immortality, however the sacred symbols, instituted to adumbrate it, have been varied under different dispensations. To our first parents, before the fall, he stood in the relation of Creator and Lord. To them, and to their posterity, since that sad catastrophe, he hath stood, and ever continueth to stand, in the new relation of Saviour and Redeemer. The man who doth not now acknowlege him in this latter character, will find him, in the former, an avenger to execute wrath : and what wrath can be so fierce and terrible, as that of the Lamb ? It is oil set on fire. The sinner unless he be in love with condemnation, must not revert to the first covenant, and aim at the acquisition of eternal life, on the foot of the law of works, or the performance of unfinning obedience. In this case the rebel claims promotion, instead of suing for pardon. He puts forth his hand to the fruit of the now forbidden tree, which is no longer food for man. It's nature is changed, with our condition. To the eye  
of

**DISC.** of human pride it still looks fair and tempting; but it's contents, when eaten, are ashes and sulphur; and immortality, without redemption, would prove the reverse of a blessing.

**III.**

Such being the state of this matter, and the order of the divine oeconomy concerning it, all that is said in the Scriptures from the fall downward, with regard to the new method of obtaining eternal life, and the appointed means of so doing, will throw light backward and serve to illustrate the account already given of the Tree of life in Paradise.

To this end may be adduced the texts, which speak of the Redeemer, his religion, truth, grace, and salvation, under the very original expression of the Tree of Life.

And here, the first place is due to that charming description, left us by king Solomon, in the proverbs, of divine wisdom personified, and represented as having been  
with

with God in the beginning, yet rejoicing  
in the habitable parts of the earth, and de-  
lighting to be with the sons of men; as  
the way, the light, and the life, the au-  
thor and giver of peace and comfort, joy  
and gladness; the Creator of all things, by  
whom the worlds were made, and without  
whom was not any thing made, that was  
made.—“Happy”—says the great teacher  
of Israel—“Happy is the man that findeth  
“Wisdom and the man that getteth un-  
“derstanding. For the merchandise of it  
“is better than the merchandise of silver,  
“and the gain thereof than fine gold. She  
“is more precious than rubies, and all the  
“things thou canst desire are not to be  
“compared unto her. Length of days is  
“in her right hand, and in her left hand  
“riches and honour. Her ways are ways  
“of pleasantness, and all her paths are  
“peace. She is a Tree of Life to them  
“that lay hold upon her, and happy is  
“every one that retaineth her.”

DISC.  
III.  

---

\* Prov. iii. 13, &amp;c.

VOL. I.

F

Thus

DISC. Thus, in another place—"The fruit of  
 III. "the righteous is a Tree of Life; and he  
 — "that winneth souls is wise<sup>f</sup>." The fruit  
 produced by the righteous, through grace,  
 copious, fair, and well flavoured, like that  
 which once grew upon the Tree of Life,  
 invites all beholders to come and partake,  
 with it's owner, of that glory and immor-  
 tality with which it shall one day be  
 crowned. And surely he, who, by these  
 means, winneth souls to righteousness and  
 salvation, is wise indeed! He resembles  
 the eternal Wisdom, the Son of God him-  
 self, who came down from heaven to win  
 souls, when the fruit of the righteous was  
 the true Tree of Life.

Again—"A wholesome, or healing  
 "tongue is a Tree of Life; but perverse-  
 "ness therein is a breach of the spirit<sup>g</sup>."

If this be so, in what passes about the  
 affairs of the present world, how much

<sup>f</sup> Prov. xi. 30.      <sup>g</sup> Prov. xv. 4.

more, when the concerns of another make DISC.  
the subject of conversation? When we III.  
extend the Proverb to them, we cannot but  
think of the two capital instances, in which  
it was most signally verified. We detest  
the tongue, that “perverted” mankind from  
the path of Life, and made a “breach in  
“the spirit,” at which sin entered, and  
death by sin. But everlasting benediction  
be upon that tongue which spake, as no  
other ever did, or could spake, pardon,  
peace, and comfort to lost mankind. That  
was the Tree of Life, whose leaves were  
for the *healing* of the nations. “With the  
“*tongue* confession is made unto *salvation*.”

Once more. “Hope deferred maketh  
“the Heart sick; but when the desire com-  
“eth, it is a Tree of Life<sup>h</sup>.” This like-  
wise is true, in temporals, of any object,  
long wished for, and at last possessed; but  
it is emphatically so of the hope of salva-  
tion, which, while it is deferred, maketh  
the heart sick; as we may find by the pa-

<sup>h</sup> Prov. XIII. 12.

DISC. thetic and forcible exclamations of those  
 III. who waited for it in old time. But when  
 — the desire, that is, the object of the desire—  
 he whom so many prophets and kings had  
 earnestly desired to see, and did not see—  
 he who was “the desire of all nations”—  
 when he came, he proved the Tree of Life  
 restored in the Paradise of God.

Two remarkable representations of things  
 spiritual and divine under the Gospel dis-  
 pensation, or in the kingdom of heaven,  
 were exhibited to Ezekiel and St. John.  
 Let us compare them with each other, and  
 both of them with the original scenery in  
 Paradise, from which the images are evi-  
 dently borrowed, and to which unless they  
 are again referred, they lose half their beau-  
 ty and significance.

In Ezekiel's vision of the Christian  
 church, under the figure of the second  
 temple, he tells us, he saw “waters issuing  
 “from the sanctuary, and giving universal  
 “life, wherever they went<sup>1</sup>.” St. John

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. XLVII. 1, 9.

saw "a river of water of life, clear as Disc.  
"chrystal, proceeding from the throne of III.  
"God and the Lamb<sup>k</sup>." And "a river," —  
we know, "went forth," at the beginning,  
"to water and make glad the Garden of  
"God, in Eden."

"On the banks of the river, on this  
"side, and on that side," Ezekiel beheld  
"very many trees;" or as it should, per-  
haps, be rendered, "a very great tree<sup>l</sup>,"  
"whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall  
"the fruit thereof be consumed: it (in  
"the singular number) shall bring forth  
"new fruit according to it's months; and  
"the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and  
"the leaves for medicine<sup>m</sup>." Let us now  
turn again to St. John—"In the midst of  
"the street of it"—the new Jerusalem, suc-  
ceeding in the place of Paradise, and the old  
Jerusalem, with it's temple and services—  
"in the midst of the street of it, and of either  
"side the river, was there the Tree of Life,  
"which bare twelve manner of fruit, and

<sup>k</sup> Rev. xxii. 1.

עץ רב מאד

<sup>m</sup> Ezek. xlvii. 12.

- DISC. "yielded it's fruit every month; and the  
 III. "leaves of the Tree were for the healing of  
 "the nations". Can we read either of these  
 descriptions, without immediately carrying  
 our thoughts back to Eden, where we see  
 growing out of the ground, at the com-  
 mand of the Lord God, "every tree good  
 "for food, and pleasant to the sight, the  
 "Tree of Life also in the midst of the  
 "garden."

But let us take a view of some other  
 figures and sacraments, ordained since the  
 fall of man, as the Tree of Life was ap-  
 pointed before it, to represent to the faith-  
 ful the blessing of immortality.

The lost blessing was to be recovered and  
 restored to the human race by the suffer-  
 ings and death of a surety, who, after dying  
 for our sins, was to rise again, for our jus-  
 tification. The grand institution, there-  
 fore, of this kind, commencing imme-  
 diately upon the fall, and continuing in

"Rev. xxii. 2.

force

force to the death and resurrection of **Disc.**  
Christ, was Sacrifice. A victim was brought **III.**  
to the altar, and being slain as a substitute  
for the offerer, first saved him from death,  
and then became food to support his life.  
And as Providence hath been ever careful  
to furnish us with continual memento's of  
the truths most important and interesting  
to us, it seems to be a circumstance worthy  
notice, that since the use of animals for  
food, and those chiefly which were made  
choice of in sacrifice, the world subsisteth  
by shedding of blood, and the death of the  
innocent is daily the life of the guilty.  
This is an additional reason, why every  
meal should be "sanctified," according to  
the apostolical direction, "by the word of  
"God, and by prayer," while the meat  
that perisheth reminds us, in so lively and  
striking a manner, of that which endureth  
unto eternal life. The history of the Pas-  
chal Lamb, with the preservation of Israel  
from the hand of the Destroyer, in that  
night to be remembered through all their

\* 1 Tim. iv. 5.

DISC. generations, the night of their leaving

III. Egypt, is a very particular, full, and beautiful exemplification of the nature and design of sacrifice. "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us;" and therefore we too "keep the feast<sup>P</sup>."

That miraculous supply of food, vouchsafed by God, to sustain his people, during their journey through the wilderness, till they came to the borders of Canaan, was another sign or symbol of immortal life, and it's support derived from above. This new and extraordinary viand sprung not out of the earth, but came down, in rain, or dew, from heaven; white to the eye, sweet to the taste, and agreeable to every palate; given freely to all; proportioned to the necessities of each; and renewed day by day, till the sojournings of Israel were over, and the promised rest attained. St. Paul, having occasion to speak of those events, which, as he expresses it, "happened unto Israel for ensamples<sup>Q</sup>," as figures or shadows

<sup>P</sup> 1 Cor. v. 7.

<sup>Q</sup> Τύποι σκηνάσεων.

of things spiritual and divine, mentions this DISC.  
miracle, with that of the water brought out III.  
of the rock, in the following terms——

“ They did all eat the same spiritual meat ;  
“ they did all drink the same spiritual  
“ drink ; for they drank of that spiritual  
“ rock, which followed them ; and that  
“ rock was Christ’.” Our Lord, in the  
sixth chapter of St. John’s Gospel, dis-  
coursing with the Jews upon this subject,  
says to them——“ Moses gave you not that  
“ bread from heaven ; but my father giv-  
“ eth you the TRUE bread from heaven.  
“ For the bread of God is he that cometh  
“ down from heaven, and giveth life unto  
“ the world’.” Christ here styleth himself  
the TRUE bread, plainly in opposition to  
that which was shadowy and figurative.  
He is the TRUE bread, which cometh  
down from heaven, and is given, day by  
day, to nourish and support the Israel of  
God, the camp of the saints, the church  
militant, during *her* pilgrimage in the  
world, till she shall come to the promised

’ 1 Cor. x. 3, &c.

” John vi. 32.

inheri-

DISC. inheritance, the land of that everlasting

III. rest, which remaineth for the people of

God. There we shall find, and enjoy for ever, the truth and substance of this sacred figure. "He that hath an ear, let him

"hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

"To him that overcometh will I give to

"eat of the HIDDEN MANNA<sup>t</sup>," that is, to

partake of that "life," which is "hid

"with Christ in God;" as the golden ves-

sel of Manna was laid up, for a memorial,

in "the holy places made with hands<sup>u</sup>."

To the same purpose served that bread,

called the *Shew Bread*, or *Bread of the Pre-*

*sence*<sup>v</sup>, set forth new, every morning, in

the tabernacle, and temple, and denoting

the sustenance to be communicated to the

souls of men from the body of Messiah;

to prefigure which body, it is well known,

that both tabernacle and temple were con-

structed, under the direction of God him-

self.

<sup>t</sup> Rev. 11. 17.

<sup>u</sup> Exod. xvi. 33. Heb. ix. 4.

<sup>v</sup> לֶחֶם פְּנִים.

Lastly,

Lastly—What the Tree of Life was to Adam in Paradise; what Sacrifice in general was to the faithful, after the fall, from Abel downward; what the Paschal Lamb was to Israel quitting Egypt; what Manna was to that people in the wilderness; what the Shew Bread was in the tabernacle and temple; all this, and if there be any other symbol of like import, it is now briefly comprehended, during the continuance of the Christian church upon earth, in the holy Eucharist. The former were prefigurative sacraments, this is a commemorative one. They shewed forth the Messiah, and the life which is by him, until his first coming; this shews forth the same Messiah, and the same life, “until his coming again.” Excluded from the Tree of Life in Paradise, we are admitted to partake of the Bread of Life in the church. Lost by the covenant of Works, we are saved by that of Grace. A cheering voice calls to us from the sanctuary, “Draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort.” The elements are honoured

DISC. honoured with the names of the Body and  
III. Blood of Christ, because appointed to signify and convey, to the worthy communicant, the blessings purchased by his Body broken, and his Blood shed, upon the cross; blessings to the soul, like the benefits conferred upon the body by bread and wine; life, health, strength, comfort, and joy.

Such have been the different symbols and sacraments vouchsafed to mankind under different dispensations, all representing and shadowing out a glorious immortality in another and better world, where we shall sit down with the author and giver of it, at his table, to eat Bread, and drink of the fruit of the Vine, new in his kingdom; where we shall give glory to the Lamb that was slain; where we shall partake of the hidden Manna, and eat the fruit of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

From the passages of Scripture thus laid together, the nature and design of the Tree  
of

of Life in Eden seem sufficiently clear. **Disc.**  
And, upon a review of what hath been **III.**  
said, it is impossible not to admire the consistency and uniformity running through both Testaments, from the second chapter of the Genesis of Moses, to the twenty-second of St. John's Revelation, which so mutually illustrate and explain each other. The analogy of faith, in this instance, proclaims aloud the wisdom and harmony of the divine dispensations, from the creation to the consummation of all things.

At sundry times, in divers manners, and by various instruments, hath heaven conveyed instruction to man. But the instruction conveyed, with the terms and figures employed to convey it, bespeak, at all times, the hand of the same omniscient and beneficent author. They must be construed and expounded upon the same plan; and when rightly construed and expounded, will be found to terminate in the same awful and interesting objects, eternal life, and the means of it's attainment. To these  
great

DISC. great ends serve the symbols of Paradise, the sacrifices of the patriarchs, the types of the law, the visions of the prophets, and the sacraments of the Gospel, with the numberless expressions and descriptions borrowed from them, and referring to them. These constitute a kind of *sacred language* peculiar to holy writ, and only explicable by it. The knowlege of this language is a science by itself, and the study of it well worthy the attention of such as have leisure and abilities to prosecute it, is it's own rich and exceeding great reward. The subjects are of such infinite moment, that all others must, in comparison, appear to be as nothing. And the dress, in which they are presented to us, is the most ornamental and engaging in the world. It is of that kind, to which both eloquence and poetry, among men, owe all their charms. The doctrines of Scripture are not proposed in a naked logical form, but arrayed in the most beautiful and striking images which the creation affords\*.

\* See LD. BACON'S Advancement of Learning, B. VI. C. 3.  
A cele-

A celebrated and well known author, DISC.  
whose essays have long been the established III.  
standard of true taste, and fine writing,  
makes, in one of them, the following ob-  
servations—" By similitudes drawn from  
" the visible parts of nature, a truth in  
" the understanding is, as it were, reflected  
" by the imagination : we are able to see  
" something like colour and shape in a no-  
" tion, and to discover a scheme of thoughts  
" traced out upon matter. And here the  
" mind receives a great deal of satisfaction,  
" and has two of it's faculties gratified at  
" the same time, while the fancy is busy  
" in copying after the understanding, and  
" transcribing ideas out of the intellectual  
" world into the material. It is this talent  
" of affecting the imagination that gives an  
" embellishment to good sense, and makes  
" one man's compositions more agreea-  
" ble than another's. It has something  
" in it like creation, and bestows a kind  
" of existence. It makes additions to na-  
" ture, and gives greater variety to God's  
" works. In a word, it is able to beautify  
" and

DISC. "and adorn the most illustrious scenes in  
 III. "the universe, and to fill the mind with  
 "more glorious shews and apparitions than  
 "can be found in any part of it".

Perhaps it is impossible any where to meet with juster sentiments than these are, clothed in more apt and elegant expressions. And this single passage would have sufficed to establish the reputation so justly acquired by it's author. The inference I would beg leave to make from it is this; If such be the case in human compositions, where similitudes are drawn by short-sighted man, to illustrate things temporal; what must it be, when they are drawn, to illustrate things eternal, by him, who has a perfect knowlege of the nature and properties of the objects from whence they are drawn, as well as of those to which they are applied; nay, who, doubtless, created the visible world, among other purposes, for that, to which he himself, in his Reve-

Mr. Addison's concluding paper on the Pleasures of the Imagination. Spectator vi. N°. 421.

lations

lations to mankind has so continually employed it, that of serving as a picture, or representation of the world at present invisible? “Eye hath not seen,” says an Apostle, “nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit<sup>2</sup>,” and the Spirit, knowing our infirmities, and whereof we are made, hath revealed them, from the beginning, by external signs, symbols, sacraments, and a figurative language, supplied by them. Upon this very principle it is, that another acknowledged master of style and composition grounds the character of the sacred writings, considered in that view—“Eloquence (says he) is that which persuades: it persuades by moving; it moves by things, and palpable ideas only: and hence no eloquence is so perfect as that of the Scriptures; since the most spiritual and metaphysical things are

DISC.

III.

---

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. II. 9.

DISC. "there represented by sensible and lively  
 III. "images".

---

In justification of this remark, let the appeal, in the instance now before us, be made to every one endued with sensibility. The position to be laid down is, that through the alone merits of the Redeemer, we now inherit eternal life. Is it possible for all the art of man to convey this truth in terms so pleasing and informing, as those few used by St. John, with allusion to the scenery in Eden—"and he shewed me  
 "a pure river of water of life, clear as  
 "crystal, proceeding out of the throne of  
 "God, and of the Lamb. And in the  
 "midst of the street of the new Jerusalem,

\* ROLLIN, *Belles Lettres*, III. 360.—"To quarrel with  
 "our Maker about this way of proceeding, would be to  
 "blame him for conveying truths to us in the most affect-  
 "ing and agreeable manner; or for creating us with those  
 "faculties, which are fitted to receive truths, thus con-  
 "veyed. For the most important truths, as we are framed  
 "at present, can make but a slight impression on the mind,  
 "unless they enter first, like a picture, into the imagina-  
 "tion, and from thence are stamped on the memory."

PETERS, *Crit. Diss. on the Book of Job*, Part 1. Sect. x.

"and

“ and of either side of the river, was there Disc.  
“ the Tree of Life, which bare twelve III.  
“ manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit  
“ every month ; and the leaves of the Tree  
“ were for the healing of the nations.”—

---

To whom, then, blessed Lord Jesu, should we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Thou art the true Tree of Life, in the midst of the Paradise of God. For us men and for our salvation, thou didst condescend to be planted, in a lowly form, upon the earth. But thy head soon reached to heaven, and thy branches to the ends of the earth. Thy head is crowned with glory, and thy branches are the branches of honour and grace. Medicinal are thy leaves to heal every malady, and thy fruits are all the blessings of immortality. It is our hope, our support, our comfort, and all our joy, to reflect, that, wearied with the labours, and worn out with the cares and sorrows of a fallen world, we shall sit down under thy shadow with great delight, and thy fruit shall be sweet to our taste !

...of the ... of the ...  
"the Tree of Life, which ...  
... of ... and ...

THE ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

... of ...  
... of ...  
... of ...

## DISCOURSE IV.

## THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.

GEN. ii. 17.

*Of the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil  
thou shalt not eat.*

**T**HIS is the first and the only law **Disc.**  
recorded to have been promulged **IV.**  
in the state of man's innocence. It may  
therefore be reasonably supposed to have  
contained in itself the substance of many  
other laws. It's comprehension may be  
inferred likewise from it's importance.  
The transgression of it occasioned the fall  
G 3 of

Disc. of the human race, and introduced the  
 IV. necessity of a redemption by the Son of  
 — God.

Could we ascertain with precision what is intended by the knowledge of good and evil. such a discovery might possibly furnish us with a key to this part of Scripture, and to the transactions relative to the trial of our first parents in Paradise. Let us therefore begin with an enquiry into the true meaning of these words.

By the knowledge of good and evil the generality of commentators understand *experimental* knowledge; and they suppose the name to have been given to the tree by a *prolepsis*, because, in the event, through man's transgression, it was to become the means of his attaining the experimental knowledge of evil; thus purchasing to himself a knowledge of good, manifested and illustrated by comparison with it's opposite; as a person is then said to understand the

the nature and value of health, when he **Disc.**  
has been deprived of it by sickness. **IV.**

---

That such was the effect of the transgression is certain : but it is not, perhaps, so certain, that this is the right interpretation of the phrase, which is by no means peculiar to this place, but occurs in other parts of the sacred writings, where it cannot be taken in the sense assigned. Nay, there are two passages even in the third chapter of Genesis itself, which do not admit of such exposition. The tempter assures the woman, that, on eating the fruit, they should be as gods, “ knowing good “ and evil.” And the Almighty afterwards says, “ Man is become like one of us, “ *knowing good and evil.*” Now the knowledge of good and evil possessed by the Deity cannot possibly be that produced by the experimental knowledge of evil. Let us examine into the usage of the words elsewhere.

In Deuteronomy we read—“ Moreover

G 4

“ your

DISC. "your little ones which ye said should be

IV. "a prey, and your children which in that

"day had no *knowledge of good and evil*, they  
"shall go in thither". Here, to know

good and evil is, evidently, to know the  
nature of both, and so to form a judgment  
upon that knowledge, as to chuse the one,  
and refuse the other. Thus again the same

sentiment is expressed in the well known  
passage of Isaiah, "Before the child shall

"know to *refuse the evil and chuse the*  
"*good*". And again, the woman of Te-

koah says to David, "As an angel of God  
"so is my Lord the king, to *discern good*

"*and bad*," that is to distinguish, judge,  
and act accordingly. This last passage is

similar to those before cited from Genesis,  
and must explain them; namely, "Ye

"shall be as gods, knowing good and  
"evil;" and, "Man is become like one

"of us, to know good and evil." It may  
be added that a New Testament writer

uses the words in the very same sense. For

<sup>a</sup> Deut. i. 39.

<sup>b</sup> Isai. vii. 15.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Sam. xiv. 17.

the Apostle, speaking of adults in Christianity, as opposed to babes in the faith, styles them such as have “their senses exercised to discern good and evil<sup>a</sup>.”

Disc. IV.

---

Such being the plain and acknowledged import of the expression in other parts of the Scriptures, why should we suppose it to be different in the instance before us? Let us rather conclude it to be the same.

The question then will be, how could this Tree in the Garden of Eden confer a knowledge of good and evil? How could it enable man to discern the nature of each? How could it inform him which was to be pursued, and which to be avoided?

Shall we say, with the Jewish writers, that there was any virtue in the fruit, to clarify the understanding, and so to teach man knowledge? But if so, why was it prohibited? For the knowledge, which we

<sup>a</sup> Heb. v. 14.

suppose

DISC. suppose to be implied in the phrase, is per-

IV. fective of man's nature; it is true wisdom;  
and if he really acquired it by tasting the forbidden fruit, he was much benefited by transgression. We must therefore determine, that the tree was designed to teach the knowledge of good and evil, or to be productive of true wisdom, not in a physical but in a moral way. It instructed our first parents to fly from and avoid death, and the cause of death, which must have been in some manner denoted by this Tree; as they were directed to chuse life, and the cause of life, signified to them by the other Tree, which bore that appellation.

The prohibition, being calculated for man's trial, was at the same time calculated to give him the information necessary for that purpose. Such is the nature and design of every law. It conveys the knowledge of good and evil by prohibiting the latter, and consequently enjoining the former. "By the law, says St. Paul, is the knowledge of sin. I had not known lust, except

“except the law had said, Thou shalt not **Disc.**  
“covet.” It is the law, in every case, **IV.**  
respectively which gives the knowledge of  
good and evil. Obedience to it is good,  
and the reward is life; disobedience is evil,  
and the penalty death. And the trial of  
man, thus informed, is, whether he will  
obey or disobey; in order to the manifest-  
ation of the lawgiver’s justice, wisdom,  
power, and glory, by rewarding or punish-  
ing him, as he does the one or the other.  
The difficulty lies here; Why an action to  
appearance so unimportant and insignifi-  
cant as that of eating or forbearing to eat  
the fruit of a Tree should have been ap-  
pointed as the test of his obedience?

To solve this difficulty, let it be con-  
sidered, that, beside those laws usually term-  
ed *moral*, and supposed to speak their own  
fitness and propriety, from an obvious view  
of the nature and constitution of things,  
it is not strange or uncommon for God to  
try the love and obedience of man by other

\* Rom. vii. 7.

DISC. precepts, styled *positive* and *ceremonial*. Such

IV. was the order for Abraham to quit his country, and kindred, and afterward, to offer his son Isaac : upon which latter occasion, notwithstanding the proofs before given by him of an obedient spirit, God was pleased to say, “ Now I know thou “ fearest God’.” Such were the ritual observances regarding sacrifice and other particulars, observed among the patriarchs, and afterwards, with additions, republished in form by Moses. Such are the injunctions to abstinence and self-denial, with the institutions of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, among Christians. What hath been thus done under every other dispensation, was done likewise in Paradise.

And as touching these same precepts called *positive*, even they are not, what they are sometime deemed to be, arbitrary precepts, given for no other reason, but because it is the will of God to give them. They carry in them a reason, which, though

† Gen. XXII. 12.

it may not be discoverable unless revealed, Disc.  
is yet nevertheless founded on the state of IV.  
human nature, it's relation to God, and it's  
various wants, at different times, and in  
different situations. The observation, in-  
deed, made by an eminent casuist<sup>s</sup> with re-  
spect to human laws, holds much stronger  
with respect to laws divine. "The obe-  
" dience of that man is much too delicate,  
" who insists upon knowing the reasons of  
" all laws before he will obey them. The  
" legislator must be supposed to have given  
" his sanction from the reason of the thing;  
" but where we cannot discover the reason  
" of it, the sanction is to be the only rea-  
" son of our obedience." This observa-  
tion, I say, is most certainly a just one.  
But as a wise God acts not without the  
highest reason, so a gracious God, in his  
dispensations to his reasonable creatures,  
has, in many instances, with his com-  
mands, communicated the reasons on which  
they were founded, and has even conde-  
scended to argue with his people, on

<sup>s</sup> Bishop TAYLOR.

the

Disc. the justice and rectitude of his proceed-  
 IV. ings.

---

Services outward and visible have been enjoined. They have always been enjoined. But then they have always been symbolical of dispositions and actions inward and spiritual. When this is the case, from unimportant and insignificant, they become the most important and significant transactions in the world. An uninformed person, living in the times of persecution under the heathen emperors, must have been, to the last degree, astonished and confounded, when told, that a Christian was in danger of eternal rejection from the presence of God, if he scattered a handful of incense on the fire; and that he was bound, by his religion, rather to die in torments, than submit to do it. But every objection vanishes in a moment when we know, that such an action, in a Christian so circumstanced, was a token of renouncing his God and Saviour, and acknowledging a false object of worship.

To

To come a little nearer to the point Disc.  
in question. Know we not, that the ac- iv.  
tion of *eating*, in particular, from the be-  
ginning, both among believers and un-  
believers, has ever been esteemed and  
constituted an action symbolical of re-  
ligious affection; and that, in the days  
of St. Paul, a man denominated himself  
either one or the other, as he partook  
of the Lord's table, or the table of an  
idol? What were these, in the new Para-  
dise, the church Christian, but the Tree  
of Life and the Tree of Death? Why  
should it seem incredible, or absurd, that,  
in man's original trial, the same action  
should have been, in some manner, signifi-  
cative of the same affection? And if in  
that truly golden age of innocence, health,  
and felicity, the food allotted to man was  
of the vegetable kind, then the fruit of a  
*Tree* must of course be the subject of the  
prohibition. In after ages, under the law  
of Moses and the permission of animal  
food, the figurative system of rites was ar-  
tificial and sanguinary; but in the sacred  
grove

DISC. grove of Eden, that first tabernacle or tem-

IV. ple, planted for a place of worship as well as of abode, the whole of the religious scenery was composed of the beautiful and luxuriant productions of primeval nature, unstained with blood, when as yet there was no malediction upon the ground.

This consideration satisfies the mind, and removes every objection made to the nature of the test, and the wisdom of God in appointing it. For if in this, as in other dispensations, the action of eating was intended to be symbolical of some mental disposition or affection, whether we can now ascertain particulars, or not, all the buffoonery of infidelity falls to the ground at once. The trial of Adam, like that of every other man, was, whether he would so far believe in God, as to look for happiness in obedience to the divine command; or would seek that happiness elsewhere, and apply for it to some forbidden object, of which the Tree must have been an emblematical representation.

You

- You will ask, what that object was? **DISC.**  
and what information, as to the know- **IV.**  
ledge of good and evil, Adam could receive  
from the prohibition? By answering the  
last question, a way may, in some measure,  
perhaps, be opened for an answer to the  
first.

A due contemplation of the prohibition  
might naturally suggest to the mind of our  
first parent the following important truths;  
especially if we consider (as we must and  
ought to consider) that to him, under the  
tuition of his Maker, all things necessary  
were explained and made clear, how ob-  
scure soever they may appear to us, form-  
ing a judgement of them from a very  
concise narrative, couched in figurative  
language, at this distance of time.

Looking upon the Tree of Knowledge,  
then, and recollecting the precept of which  
it was the subject, Adam might learn, that  
God was the sovereign Lord of all things:  
that the dominion vested in man over the

DISC. creatures was by no means a dominion absolute and independent: that without, and  
 IV. beside God, there was no true and real good: that to desire any thing without and beside him, was evil; that no temporal worldly good, however fair and tempting it's appearance, was to be fixed upon by man, as the source of his felicity: that the sole rule for shunning, or desiring things sensible, should be the will and word of God; and that good and evil should be judged of by that standard alone: that the obedience, which God would accept, must be paid with all the powers and affections of the mind, shewing itself careful and prompt in every the least instance: that man was not yet placed in a state of consummate and established bliss; but that such state was by him to be earnestly expected, and incessantly desired; and that he must take the way to it, marked and pointed out by God himself<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> See VATRINCA—*Observat. Sacra*, Vol. II. Lib. IV. Cap. XII. from whom many of the sentiments in this Discourse are borrowed.

These particulars seem to flow from the **Disc.**  
prohibition in an easy and natural train. **IV.**  
And they lead us to answer the other ques-  
tion, namely, What was the object repre-  
sented by the Tree of Knowledge? It was  
that object, on which man is prone to set  
his affections, instead of placing them on  
a better; it was that object, which, in  
every age, has been the great rival of the  
Almighty in the human heart; it was  
that object, which, in one way or other,  
has always been “worshipped and served  
“rather than the Creator;” it was the  
CREATURE, the WORLD; and the grand  
trial was, as it ever hath been, and ever  
will be, till the world shall cease to exist,  
whether things visible, or things invisible,  
should obtain the preference; whether  
man should walk “by sight, or by faith.”  
To know this, was the knowledge of good  
and evil; and this knowledge came by the  
law of God, which said, “Thou shalt not  
“covet.” Man’s wisdom consisted in the  
observation of that law; but an enemy per-

*Our wisdom.*

**DISC.** suaded him to seek wisdom by transgressing  
**IV.** it. He did so ; and had nothing left, but  
 to repent of his folly : a case that happens,  
 among his descendants, every day, and  
 every hour.

Let us, therefore, consider the Tree of Knowledge, in this light, with respect to it's nature, situation, design, qualities, effects, and the knowlege conferred by it.

The fruit of this Tree was, to appearance, fair and pleasant ; but, when tasted, it became, by the divine appointment, the cause of death. Now, what is it, which, in the eyes of all mankind, seems equally pleasing and alluring, but the end thereof, when coveted in opposition to the divine command, proves to be death ? It is the World, with it's pleasures and it's glories, desired by it's votaries, *per fas atque nefas*, to the denial of God, and to their own destruction. The Scriptures proclaim this aloud, and the experience of all generations confirms their testimony. Indeed, what is  
 there

there in the universe, but the Creator, and Disc.  
the Creature? And between whom, but IV.  
them, can the contest subsist, for the love  
and obedience of man?

The Tree of Knowledge was situated in the midst of the garden, as was the Tree of Life. They stood near together, but they stood in opposition. The divine dispensations are always best illustrated by each other. Under the Gospel, Jesus Christ is the Tree of Life. What is it that opposes him, and, notwithstanding all that he has done, and suffered, and commanded, and promised, and threatened, is continually, by it's solicitations, being ever present and at hand, seducing men into the path of death? Scripture and experience again join in assuring us, that it is the World. When we are in the house of God, which is Eden restored, engaged in hearing his word, and in the exercises of devotion, we sit down, as it were, under the shadow of the Tree of Life. No sooner are we gone from it, and too often even while we are there,

DISC. the World intrudes, and draws off to  
 IV. other subjects our thoughts and our affec-  
 tions. What saith Moses under the law?

“ Behold I set before you, this day, life  
 “ and good, death and evil; chuse ye<sup>k</sup>.”

Are not these the two Trees of Paradise? But imagination cannot form to itself a more exquisite and affecting piece of scenery upon this subject, than that exhibited by king Solomon in the book of Proverbs; a book, whose end and design is, to teach us the true knowlege of good and evil, that we may pursue the one, and avoid the other. In his viiith chapter, under the usual figure of an harlot, loosely decked in a profusion of vain ornaments, he introduces the World, or the false wisdom thereof, by it's several fictitious charms, and meretricious blandishments, alluring the unwary to the chambers of destruction. In the succeeding chapter, by way of perfect contrast, appears, in the beauty and majesty of holiness, the offspring of the Almighty, the Son of the Father, the true and eternal

<sup>k</sup> Deut. xxx. 15.

Wisdom of God, with all the tender love and affectionate concern of a parent, inviting men to the substantial joys and unfading pleasures of immortality, in the house of salvation. Again we are presented with the Tree of Death, and the Tree of Life. From Solomon let us pass to St. Paul: "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life. If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Behold once more the Trees of Death and Life. Such, in good truth, is the face of things every where offering itself to view; such is the contest incessantly carrying on in this present World, which, on the one hand entices the children of Adam, by giving themselves up to it's enjoyments, to taste the Tree of Death; while the Redeemer, on the other, still continues to cry aloud by his word, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life."

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 6, 13.

DISC. The Tree of Knowledge was designed to  
 IV. be the test of Adam's obedience, the sub-  
 ject matter of his trial. The World, with  
 its desireable objects, is the test of our  
 obedience, the subject matter of our trial,  
 whether we will make it our chief good,  
 or prefer the promise of God to it. Thus,  
 the trial of Abraham was, whether he  
 would quit his country, and kindred, and  
 yield up his only son in obedience to the  
 divine command, trusting to a recompence  
 in reversion. The trial of Job was, whe-  
 ther he would still serve God, when de-  
 prived of his possessions, his family, and  
 his health. After this sort was our Lord  
 Jesus Christ himself proved by the most  
 powerful incitements of the human passi-  
 ons. Of the Tree of knowledge Satan  
 tempted him to put forth his hand and  
 take and eat, that the second Adam might  
 be tried after the example of the first. The  
 disciples also are tried in like manner with  
 their blessed master. They are instructed  
 to renounce the World, and to deny them-  
 selves: which is only the original prohibi-  
 tion

tion in other words; "Of the Tree of Disc.  
"the Knowledge of good and evil thou IV.  
"shalt not eat."

---

The apparent qualities of the forbidden tree are represented to have been these. It seemed "good for food, and fair to the sight, and a tree to be desired to make one wise." It is remarkable, that St. John, laying before us an inventory of the World, and all that is in it, employs a division entirely similar. "Love not the world," says he, "neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desire of the flesh, and the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the desire thereof; but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever." Here is a picture of the fatal Tree, full blown, with all its temptations about it, drawn, by the pencil

<sup>m</sup> 1 John 11. 15.

DISC. of truth, in it's original and proper colours.

IV. The expressions tally, to the minutest degree of exactness. The "desire of the flesh" answers to "good for food;" the "desire of the eyes" is parallel with "fair to the sight;" and the "pride of life" corresponds with "a Tree to be desired to make one wise." The opposition between this Tree and the other is strongly marked. "If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him." And we are informed, that one leads to death, the other to life. "The World passeth away, and the desire thereof; but he that doth the Will of God abideth for ever." Precisely conformable, in every circumstance, was the threefold temptation of the second Adam. He was tempted to convert stones into bread for food, to satisfy "the desire of the flesh;" he was tempted with the kingdoms of the world and the glories of them, to satisfy "the desire of the eyes;" he was tempted to work a miracle on the pinnacle of the temple, and to shew himself moving aloft through the air in the fight

sight of the multitude, to display “the Disc.  
“ pride of life.” He repelled the tempter, IV.  
as our first parents should have done, and  
as we their children should do now, in-  
stead of judging according to appearances,  
by a firm and resolute appeal to the Reve-  
lation of God.

Thus, whether we consider the Tree of  
Knowledge as to it's nature, it's situation,  
it's design, or it's qualities, it seems to have  
been a very apt and significant emblem of  
the Creature, or the World, with it's de-  
lights and it's glories, the objects opposed,  
in every age, to God and his word. To  
reject the allurements of the former, and  
obey the dictates of the latter, is the know-  
ledge of good and evil, and the true wisdom  
of man. So that the forbidden Tree in  
Paradise, when the divine intentions con-  
cerning it are explained from other parts of  
Scripture, teaches the important lesson  
more than once inculcated by Solomon,  
and which was likewise the result of holy  
Job's enquiries; “ Behold, the fear of the  
“ Lord

DISC. "Lord, that is wisdom; and to DEPART  
 IV. "FROM EVIL IS UNDERSTANDING."

Whoever shall attentively reflect on the evidence which has been produced, and duly consider the perfect coincidence and harmony of the Scriptures and dispensations of God upon the subject, will, perhaps, be convinced, that, in the main, we must have fixed upon the true exposition of "the knowledge of good and evil," and the nature of man's original trial. There is a doubt, or difficulty, which offers itself and may seem to require a solution. It is this. We all know, as the state of human affairs is at present, by what manner, and by what temptations, the world solicits our desires after objects forbidden; but what temptation, you will say, could it hold forth to our first parents, existing alone, invested with sovereignty over it, and possessed of all its pleasures, and its glories, in the Garden of Eden? This question will, perhaps, be best answered by asking one or two more. What tempta-

DISC.

IV.

temptation, then, let it be asked, could the World present to the people of God, when placed in the land of Promise, and blessed with every species of temporal felicity? What temptation can the World present to a pious Christian, placed by Providence in a state of affluence, and furnished with every good that his heart can wish for? The truth is, that the World, even supposing it to have been lawfully attained, and to be in ever so good hands, has *this* power of temptation; it may engage the attention of the human mind, and attract to itself the affections of the human heart, till, by degrees, it's Maker is forsaken and forgotten. It may induce a man to consider it as an abode, and no longer to desire a removal to higher and better things with God above. "Beware, says Moses, lest "when thou hast eaten, and art full, thine "heart be lifted up, and thou forget the "Lord thy God." This proved to be the case of the Israelites. It is the temptation too often fatal both to nations and

\* Deut. viii. 14.

indivi-

DISC. individuals, when indulged by heaven with  
 IV. success and prosperity. And if the World,  
 ——— obscured as it's brightness has been by the  
 fall, can and does now produce such an effect on the wisest of those that are at any time favoured with a large share of it, how much more must it have been able to charm, and to deceive, when first formed in perfect beauty! Considering this circumstance, and withal, how "the Creature," in the earliest ages, was "worshipped and served, instead of the Creator", one is almost ready to think it possible, that Idolatry itself might take it's beginning in Eden.

From the sad experience of those who have gone before us, let us learn to have recourse to the Law of God, for our *knowledge of good and evil*, and to refrain from the fruit of the forbidden Tree, the Tree of Death. Of this fruit, though proceeding from the same root, there have been different kinds put forth and exhibited in different periods of time, agreeable to the turn  
 and

and temper of each. In the days of the patriarchs, and of the Israelites, it was the worship of the material elements, or powers of nature, in the place of Him who made them, accompanied with every kind of impurity. Such was the religion of the revolted nations, and such the rites with which it was celebrated. Yet such a religion, and such rites, the people of God, for many ages, notwithstanding all that he did for them, and said to them, strange as it may appear to us at present, were ever ready to adopt and embrace. They apostatised to idolatry, with the divine glory blazing before their eyes, on the top of Sinai. Nor could the wisest and greatest of their princes afterwards escape the contagion. This corruption, which the Babylonish captivity, like a well applied caustic, served to eat out, and to do away, was succeeded by a disease of another kind, but one that stuck to them, till it destroyed them; a mistake as to the nature of their oeconomy; a confidence in externals; a deep hypocrisy; a spirit wholly secularized;  
an

Disc.

IV.

DISC. an ambition to have all the kingdoms of  
 IV. the world subject to Jerusalem, and the  
 — wealth and glory of them centered there.  
 “The desire of the flesh, the desire of the  
 “eyes, and the pride of life,” were chosen  
 in opposition to the celestial fruits of love  
 and obedience, humility and charity, faith  
 and holiness, produced among them by Je-  
 sus Christ, the Tree of immortality. They  
 “put forth the hand, and tasted.” But  
 soon the exterminating angel dispossessed  
 them of their Paradise, and they died the  
 death.

Since the ascension of Christ, the hea-  
 then world has been converted to the Gos-  
 pel, and that desert has become the garden  
 of the Lord. But in this garden also—is  
 there no Tree of Death? no specious fruit  
 held forth to entice the unwise to per-  
 dition? What is the doctrine, which, in  
 some parts of Christendom, gives adora-  
 tion to beings that are not God; or that,  
 which, in others, denies it to Him who is  
 so? What is the scheme, that asserts the  
 non-

non-necessity of a Divine Revelation, claiming to man the right, and attributing to him the power of making a religion for himself, and prescribing to his Maker the terms of his own acceptance? What is the atheistical policy, which excludes the Creator from the care of his works, and his Providence from the kingdoms of the earth? What is that system of paganism revived under the name and notion of *philosophy*, as opposed to Christianity, and every thing that is called Religion, by which either the Deity is materialized, or matter deified? What is that unbounded licentiousness in principles and manners, daily growing more and more into vogue, and shamelessly, by some of the new philosophers, defended in form? What is the luxury, the splendor, the extravagance, the dissipation, the abandoned profligacy, and ungodliness of the age?

Behold the flourishing state of the fatal Tree! View the extent of it's branches, and the abundance of it's fruit, in these

DISC. latter days! But remember, that, still—

—  
rv. the end is Death; to a nation, excision; to individuals, without repentance and faith, destruction everlasting from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall descend into his garden to make inquisition, and call offenders to their final account. Be not ye therefore deceived and seduced, however the temptation may seem “fair to the sight, and good for food;” however “desirable” it may be represented “to make you wise.” Take your direction, through life, from the word of God, and be not prevailed upon to falsify and transgress it. The conflict may be sharp, but it will be soon over; bear up resolutely under it; and for your consolation and encouragement in the hour of trial, when strongly solicited to taste the Tree of Death, listen to that strength-conferring voice, which cryeth from the eternal throne, in words that will bear a repetition—“To him that overcometh will I “give to eat of the Tree of Life, which “is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

( 131 )

## DISCOURSE V.

### THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

Z E C H. ix. 9, 10.

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout,  
O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king  
cometh unto thee: he is just, and having  
salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass,  
and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I  
will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and  
the horse from Jerusalem, and the bat-  
tle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak  
peace unto the heathen: and his dominion  
shall be from sea even unto sea, and from  
the river even to the ends of the earth.*

**T**HIS prophecy was delivered by Disc.  
Zechariah, five hundred years be- v.  
fore the advent of Christ. And St. Mat.

DISC. thew, in the Gospel appointed for this  
v. day, affirmeth it to have had it's accomplishment when our Lord entered Jerusalem, in the manner here described, amidst the acclamations of the attending multitude. "All this was done, that it might  
 "be fulfilled which was spoken by the  
 "prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of  
 "Sion, Behold thy King cometh unto thee,  
 "meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt  
 "the sole of an ass." The prediction is of the literal kind, and it was literally and most exactly fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. No other King, with these characteristic marks upon him, ever thus came to Sion, before him; and since the Jews rejected him, they have lost their temple, their city, and their country; nor has there been any Sion, to which their King might come. Jerusalem would not rejoice, on the day when the prophet had enjoined her to rejoice and therefore she hath had cause to mourn from that day to this. The rulers of Sion were vexed and chagrined at beholding a scene, which should have excited  
 them

them to shout aloud for joy. The disciples indeed, exulted, and sang Hosanna to the Son of David. Could Messiah enter his capital, unacknowledged? That was impossible. Had men been silent upon this occasion, the buildings and pavements of the city must have supplied the defect, and borne their attestation to the promised and long expected king of Israel. "I tell you," replied our Lord to the Pharisees, who desired him to rebuke his disciples, "I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

That we may perceive the full force and beauty of the prophecy before us, it will be necessary to shew it's connection with the preceding part of the chapter, wherein it stands.

In this ix<sup>th</sup> chapter of his prophecy, Zechariah denounceth some of the divine judgements, which were executed by that scourge of heaven, Alexander the Great, when he overran Syria, took Damascus,

DISC. burnt Tyre, destroyed Gaza, and, in imitation of his favourite hero, dragged the governor thereof at his chariot wheels. "The  
 V. "burden of the word of the Lord in the  
 "land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be  
 "the rest thereof—And Hamath also shall  
 "border thereby, Tyrus and Sidon though  
 "it be very wise. And Tyrus did build  
 "herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire  
 "of the streets. Behold, the Lord will  
 "cast her out, and he will smite her power  
 "in the sea, and she shall be devoured with  
 "fire. Askelon shall see it and fear; Gaza  
 "also shall see it, and shall be very sorrowful, and Ekron: for her expectation shall  
 "be ashamed, and the king shall perish  
 "from Gaza, and Askelon shall not be inhabited." The prophet next foretelleth the mixture and incorporation of the Philistines, when thus humbled by Alexander, with their old enemies the Jews. "And a  
 "bastard," or, an alien generation, (*αλλογενες*, say the LXX) "shall dwell in Ashdod;  
 "and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines;  
 "liftines;

“ liftines ; and I will take away his blood  
“ out of his mouth, and his abominations  
“ from between his teeth ; but he that re-  
“ maineth, even he shall be for our God,  
“ and he shall be as a governor in Judah  
“ and Ekron as a Jebusite.” Amidst these  
revolutions and alterations of affairs in the  
world, God promiseth, in the next verse,  
to preserve his temple, while so many cas-  
tles and strong holds about Jerusalem were  
overturned, so many cities swept of their  
inhabitants by the besom of destruction.  
“ And I will encamp about mine house,  
“ because of the army, because of him that  
“ passeth by, and because of him that re-  
“ turneth : and no oppressor shall pass  
“ through them any more ; for now have I  
“ seen with mine eyes.” Then followeth the  
prophecy in my text—“ Rejoice greatly,  
“ O daughter of Sion ; shout, O daughter  
“ of Jerusalem ; behold, thy King cometh  
“ unto thee ; he is just, and having salva-  
“ tion, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and  
“ a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut  
“ off the chariot from Ephraim, and the

DISC. "horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow  
 v. "shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace  
 "unto the heathen: and his dominion  
 "shall be from sea even to sea, and from  
 "the river to the ends of the earth." As  
 if the prophet had spoken in more words  
 to Jerusalem thus—"Thine eyes, in the  
 "generations following, shall behold the  
 "flourishing pride of sundry nations, each  
 "endeavouring to overtop others in height  
 "of glory and temporal state; each striv-  
 "ing to keep others under, by human  
 "policy, or strength of war. And whilst  
 "the sight of their mutual conquests shall  
 "possess thy thoughts, thou wilt be ready,  
 "in the pride of thine heart, to say, Jeru-  
 "salem and Judah one day shall have their  
 "turn, and in that day shall the sons of  
 "Jacob, the seed of Abraham and David,  
 "be like the monarchs of Greece and Per-  
 "sia, far exalted above the kings of other  
 "nations; every one, able to bear arms,  
 "glistering with his golden shield, and  
 "leading the princes of the heathen, as  
 "prisoners, bound in chains, and their no-  
 "bles

“bles in fetters of iron. The beauty and Dis c.  
“riches of their costly temples shall deck v.  
“the chariots of my children, which their  
“captives shall draw in triumph. But  
“thou shouldest remember, that the pro-  
“mised prince of peace, of benignity, and  
“justice, should not be sought among the  
“tumultuous hosts of war: nor canst thou  
“hope that He, who is the Desire of all  
“nations, should be thy Leader or Gene-  
“ral, to destroy those nations. It is glory  
“and honour enough for thee, glory and  
“honour greater than the greatest con-  
“queror on earth could ever compass, that  
“the King of kings and Lord of lords  
“shall be anointed and proclaimed King  
“upon the hill of Sion: that the inviola-  
“ble decrees of everlasting peace shall be  
“given to all the nations under heaven  
“from thy courts. And therefore while  
“horses and chariots, and other glorious  
“preparations of war, shall present them-  
“selves to thy view, suffer them to pass as  
“they come, and rest assured, that thy  
“King, of whose coming thou hast often  
“been

Disc. " been admonished by the prophets, is not

v. " among them. The manner of his com-

— " ing to thee, so thou wilt mark it, bodes

" far better tidings to thee and all the na-

" tions besides, than can accompany the

" prosperous success of wars, or any victory

" stained with blood. What king of Judah

" or Israel did ever levy an army, tho' in

" just defence of their country and people,

" on so fair terms, that no poor amongst

" them were pinched with taxes for the

" supply? What victory did they ever ob-

" tain so cheap, that many of their child-

" ren were not forced to sit down with

" loss, many wounded, others maimed, and

" some always slain? But, lo, now I bring

" thee unusual matter of exultation and

" joy. For behold thy King cometh unto

" thee, whensoever he cometh, attended

" with justice for his guide, and salvation

" for his train. He shall execute judgment

" without oppression: he shall save thee,

" so thou wilt be saved, without destroying

" any, being able to make thy lame to go,

" to give life to thy dead, without hazard

" either

Disc.

v.

“ either of life or limb to any that rests  
“ within thy territories. Such shall be the  
“ manner of his coming, and such his pre-  
“ sence, that the poorest wretch among  
“ thy children may think himself more  
“ happy, than any king of Judah or Israel  
“ which was before him, so he will but  
“ conform himself to the temper and de-  
“ meanour of his Saviour. For he cometh  
“ unto the poor and lowly, riding upon  
“ an ass, to wean thee from the vain hopes  
“ of the heathen, from which the prophets  
“ have so often dehorted thy forefathers.  
“ Some put their trust in horses, and some  
“ in chariots ; but thy confidence must be  
“ in the Lord thy God, who will always  
“ be thy King, to defend thee, to protect  
“ thee, to strengthen thee through this  
“ weakness\*.”

Having thus taken a general view of the prophecy, proceed we to make some observations and reflections upon the several parts of it, in the order in which they lie.

\* Dr. JACKSON, Vol. II. p. 845.

Beautiful

**Disc.** Beautiful and striking is the manner in  
v. which it is introduced. The prophet doth  
not coldly inform Jerusalem, that her King  
should come to her, and that, when he did  
come, she ought to rejoice. Rapt into  
future times, he seems to have been pre-  
sent at the glorious scene. Standing upon  
mount Olivet, he hears the Hosanna's of  
the disciples, and beholds the procession  
approach towards the gates of Jerusalem:  
he turns himself to the city, and breaks  
forth in transport, "Rejoice greatly, O  
daughter of Sion; shout O daughter of  
Jerusalem!" Religion, then, hath it's  
joys; a prophet calleth us to exult and  
shout; and often as this holy season re-  
turneth, the church secondeth his call.  
Her services dispel the gloom of melan-  
choly, and put gladness into the hearts of  
all her children. They are wonderfully  
calculated to renew good impressions in our  
minds, to increase our faith, to invigorate  
our hope, to blow up the sacred fires of  
devotion and charity, and to fill us with  
all holy and heavenly tempers. They pro-  
duce

duce a joy "which no man taketh from **Disc**  
"us," and in which "a stranger inter- **v.**  
"meddleth not;" they inspire a pleasure  
which no pain can overcome, of which no  
time can deprive us, and which death will  
perfect and ensure to us for ever. Perverse  
Jerusalem rejected joy, and chose sorrow  
for her portion. Glad tidings came to the  
Gentiles, and were gladly received. The  
Christian church, formed of them, is now  
the daughter of Sion, and the new Jeru-  
salem. To her the promises are transferred,  
and made good. She therefore obeyeth the  
prophet's injunction; she continually, with  
the holy Virgin, "magnifieth the Lord,  
"and her spirit rejoiceth in God her  
"Saviour."

The next words of our prophet assign  
the reason why Jerusalem was called upon  
to rejoice, namely, the approach of her  
King; "Behold thy King cometh unto  
"thee." A person was to visit Jerusalem,  
who should deserve to be emphatically  
styled "her King." The nations had their  
kings

**DISC.** kings and conquerors, their Nebuchadnezz-

**V.** zars and Cyrus's, their Alexanders and Cæ-

---

sars; these appeared, in their turns, upon the stage, contending for the empire of the world. Each performed the part assigned him by an all directing Providence, and then vanished away. Sion beheld all these changes, and still survived the commotions occasioned by them. The prophets had promised her a King, who should overcome her enemies, and triumph gloriously; who should erect, in the time of the fourth great monarchy, an universal and everlasting kingdom, and give laws to the world; nay, who should govern all things in heaven and earth. At the time predicted, not only Jerusalem looked for a completion of the prophecies, but the whole earth sat still, expecting that Judea should give her a King. And lo, the promised King of the Jews is born of the royal house and lineage of David. All the circumstances of his birth, the words of his mouth, and the actions of his life, demonstrate him to be the Messiah, foretold by the prophets  
from

from the beginning of the world. He DISC.  
cometh to his own, and Jerusalem is com- v.  
manded to rejoice and shout; but his own  
receive him not, and Jerusalem turns a deaf  
ear to the voices of all her prophets, not  
suffering herself to believe that any thing  
said by them could refer to Jesus of Naza-  
reth. Her heart was depraved and har-  
dened: she demanded to be put in posses-  
sion of the empire of this world; she des-  
pised the appearance of her King, with  
the acclamations of an ignoble multitude,  
and soon nailed a SPIRITUAL monarch to  
the cross.

With how different sensations are the  
members of the church Christian affected,  
when they hear the words of Zechariah,  
“Behold, thy King cometh unto thee,”  
and read the history of their accomplish-  
ment in the Gospel for this day. With  
inexpressible delight we carry back our  
thoughts to that happy era, when the King  
of the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, made  
his appearance in the flesh. We join his  
train,

DISC. train, we attend him in his progress to-  
v. wards Jerusalem, and seem to enter with  
him into the holy city, while “the mul-  
“titude of those who go before, and those  
“who follow after, cry, Hosanna to the  
“Son of David; blessed is he that cometh  
“in the name of the Lord.” When we  
behold this scene, as presented to our view  
at this season, we are taught to conceive  
by it a noble idea of Messiah, at his first  
advent, ushered into the church, as her  
Lord and King, the prophets going before,  
and the apostles following after him, all  
proclaiming and bearing testimony to Jesus,  
all singing Hosannah to the son of David,  
all pronouncing the blessedness of him, who  
thus cometh in the name of Jehovah. We  
know that this is He to whom all the pro-  
phets give witness, and that he hath ful-  
filled those things which were written of  
him. We know, that he hath overcome  
our enemies, and triumphed gloriously;  
that he hath erected an universal and ever-  
lasting kingdom, and given laws to the  
world; nay, that he doth govern all things  
in

in heaven and earth. Of the manner in DISC.  
which he achieved his victories, and of v.  
the nature and extent of his kingdom, we  
shall have occasion to speak, as we proceed  
to consider the character which our prophet  
hath drawn of this King of Israel. "He  
" is just, and having salvation, lowly, and  
" riding on an ass."

Righteousness, Salvation, and Humility,  
distinguish the person and reign of Mes-  
siah. Righteousness leads the way. "He  
" is just, or righteous." St. Stephen, in  
his apology to the Jews, affirmeth the pro-  
phets to have foreshewn the coming of  
Jesus under the title of the Just One.  
" Which of the prophets have not your  
" fathers persecuted? And they have slain  
" them which shewed before of the coming  
" of the Just One; of whom ye have been  
" now the betrayers and murderers<sup>b</sup>." Da-  
vid in spirit, thus addresseth King Mes-  
siah, as we are assured by St Paul's appli-  
cation of the passage in the first chapter of

<sup>b</sup> Acts vii. 52.

DISC. the epistle to the Hebrews. "Thy throne,

v. "O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre

"of righteousness is the sceptre of thy  
"kingdom. Thou hast loved righteous-  
"ness, and hated iniquity; therefore God,  
"even thy God, hath anointed thee with  
"the oil of gladness above thy fellows<sup>c</sup>."

Jeremiah describeth him as righteous him-  
self, and as making others so. "The days  
"come saith Jehovah, that I will raise  
"unto David a Righteous Branch: and a  
"King shall reign, and prosper, and shall  
"execute Judgement and Justice in the  
"earth—And this is his name whereby he  
"shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTE-  
"OUSNESS<sup>d</sup>." And indeed, we seldom find  
the kingdom of Christ mentioned, but  
Righteousness is immediately mentioned,  
as the first fruits of it. Righteousness, the  
Astræa of the antients, left the earth at the  
fall of Adam, and returned again to visit  
and to bless it, at the birth of Christ. He  
was conceived without stain, lived without  
sin, and died without guilt. He conversed

<sup>c</sup> Ps. XLV. 5.

<sup>d</sup> Jer. XXIII. 6.

in the world, yet contracted none of it's Disc. pollution, but, like his glorious emblem v. the light, passed through all things undefiled. His bitterest enemies, Jews and Gentiles, joined to attest his uprightness. "Have thou nothing to do with that just man<sup>e</sup>," said the wife of Pilate. Pilate himself, upon the strictest examination, declared, "I find no fault in this man<sup>f</sup>." Judas, who had every possible opportunity of knowing the character of his master, cried out, in an agony of despair, "I have betrayed the innocent blood<sup>g</sup>;" and the Roman centurion, who watched at the cross gave in his evidence, "Certainly, this was a Righteous man<sup>h</sup>." The kingdom which he came to establish was a kingdom of Righteousness. He called men from the ways of sin by his sermons, he allured them from it's pleasures by his example, he cleansed them from it's guilt by his blood, and rescued them from it's power by his Spirit. Where the Gospel

<sup>e</sup> Matth. xxvii. 19.<sup>f</sup> Luke xxiii. 4.<sup>g</sup> Matth. xxvii. 4.<sup>h</sup> Luke xxiii. 47.

DISC. came, idolatry gave place to true piety;  
 v. every holy and amiable temper was planted  
 — and flourished in the hearts of the regenerate; and to be a Christian, was to be every thing that was honest, and just, and good. Thus did Jesus of Nazareth answer his title of "the Just One," and evince himself to be the true "Melchisedech," or "King of Righteousness." The Jews chose not to be the subjects of such a King, and declared, they "would not have this man to reign over them." Therefore the kingdom of God was taken from them, and given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof. Be it our care, while we celebrate the advent of our King, not to forget this part of his character; and let us rest assured, that if we would be his subjects, as well as pass for such, and share the blessings of his reign, as well as talk of them, we must be like him. His subjects are his *children*; and none will be finally owned by him as such, who bear not impressed upon them the similitude of their *Father*.

Salvation

Salvation is the next sign and token DISC.  
which Zechariah hath given us, whereby v.  
to know the King of Zion. "He is just,  
"and having Salvation." He was to execute that part of the regal office, which consisteth in rescuing a people from their oppressors. Whoever reads the history of Israel, finds it to contain an account of many Saviours, raised up, at sundry times, for this purpose. Such were Moses, Barak, Gideon, Sampson, and many more in the ages after them. But no one of these was "He that should come." They, like the legal priests, "were not suffered to continue, by reason of death;" the church was still taught to "look for another" and a more glorious Saviour, in the latter days; the prophecies were full of the great Salvation which he should effect; so great, that, in comparison of it, former deliverances were not to be mentioned, unless as shadows and faint resemblances of that grand and complete one. At the time appointed, Jesus of Nazareth appeared in this character, and brought his credentials with  
K 3 him,

**DISC.** him, the authenticity of which was fairly  
**v.** allowed by a master in Israel; "No man  
" can do these miracles that thou doest, ex-  
" cept God were with him." At the birth  
of Christ, an herald from heaven proclaim-  
ed him to the shepherds by this style and  
title. "Behold, I bring you good tidings  
" of great joy, which shall be to all peo-  
" ple. For unto you is born this day, in  
" the city of David, a SAVIOUR." And  
if tidings of Salvation are not tidings of  
joy, what tidings can be such? The greater  
the Salvation, the greater ought to be the  
joy. And what is the deliverance of a  
single people from a temporal adversary,  
when compared with the Salvation of the  
whole world from the oppression of the  
spiritual enemy; from sin, and sickness,  
and sorrow, and pain, and death, and hell?  
This was the salvation which Jesus under-  
took to effect; and his miracles declared  
him equal to the mighty task. He forgave  
sin, he healed sickness, he dispelled sor-  
row, he removed pain, he raised the dead,  
he cast out devils. Had not the prophet  
reason

reason to cry out, " Rejoice greatly, O Disc.  
" daughter of Zion ; shout, O daughter v.  
" of Jerusalem ; behold, thy King, behold,  
" thy righteous Saviour cometh unto thee?"

But the daughter of Zion would have shut her gates against this righteous Saviour ; the daughter of Jerusalem renounced her part and portion in such Salvation. She had set her heart upon being great in this world, whereas Christ came to make her so in another. And whenever Christians shall resemble Jews in the turn of their affections, whenever they shall regard religion only as a means of aggrandizing themselves upon earth, in their hearts they will entertain the same notion of the Salvation of Jesus, and the same contempt for it, that the Jews did. But let the sufferings of Jerusalem warn us, that we share not in her guilt, lest we share also in her punishment, and come into the same condemnation. We acknowledge for our Saviour the person whom Israel rejected. Let us not mistake the nature of his Salvation. " He  
" shall be called Jesus," saith the angel .

DISC. to his holy mother, "for he shall *save* his  
 v. "people from their SINS<sup>i</sup>."

---

As the Salvation to be wrought by King Messiah was to be so different from that wrought by all other kings and conquerors, different likewise was to be his appearance and demeanour. "Behold, thy King com-  
 "eth unto thee; he is just, and having  
 "salvation, lowly, and riding on an ass." This is demonstration against the Jews, that how great soever, in the end, the external glory of Messiah is to be, (and neither they nor we can set that too high) yet he was once to visit his people in great humility; he was to appear, at his first advent, in a state of humiliation. The nature of his undertaking required it, and their own law and prophets are clear and express upon the subject. Though God, he was to become man; "A virgin shall  
 "conceive, and bear a son, and they shall  
 "call his name IMMANUEL, which is, be-  
 "ing interpreted, GOD WITH US<sup>k</sup>." He

<sup>i</sup> Matt. 1. 21.

<sup>k</sup> Isai. vii. 14. Matt. 1. 23.

was to be “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;” a man without “form or comeliness<sup>1</sup>,” without the glare of outward splendor to recommend him; “his visage,” on the contrary, by suffering affliction, was to be “marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men<sup>m</sup>.” He was to keep the law, and to die for sin. “Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not—burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, lo I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart<sup>n</sup>. He made his soul an offering for sin; he was cut off out of the land of the living; he made his grave with the rich<sup>o</sup>.” If words can render any thing plain, it is plain from these passages, that Messiah was to be an humble and a suffering character. The types and the prophecies are as positive for his humiliation, as they are for his exalta-

Disc.  
v.

<sup>1</sup> Isai. LIII.

<sup>n</sup> Ps. XL. 7. Heb. x. 7.

<sup>m</sup> Isai. LIII. 14.

<sup>o</sup> Isai. LIII.

tion ;

DISC. tion; nor could any one person accomplish  
v. them all, without being equally remarkable for lowliness and meekness, glory and honour. The modern Jews, sensible of this, have framed to themselves two Messiahs; one, Ben Joseph, of the tribe of Ephraim, designed to be poor and contemptible, and to undergo great indignities; the other, Ben David, of the tribe of Judah, who is to be victorious, to conquer all the earth before them, and to live for ever in temporal grandeur. This idle dream, contrary to the tenor of the whole Old Testament, and unknown to their expositors before Christ came, shews us, that blindness hath happened to Israel not for want of light, but because they have shut their eyes against it till they cannot now open them, to behold the brightness of it's shining; to view Jesus of Nazareth, as the end of their law, and the accomplishment of their prophecies. To an unprejudiced person, acquainted with that law, and those prophecies, the sight of the lowly Jesus, entering Jerusalem in great humility, and in still greater,

greater, bowing his head and expiring on Disc.  
mount Calvary, is a no less striking evidence v.  
of his being the Messiah, than his glorious  
resurrection from the dead, and triumphant  
ascension into heaven. The Scriptures must  
needs be fulfilled, in one respect, as well  
as the other. Thus it behoved Christ to  
suffer, and thus it behoved him to humble  
himself, in order to his suffering. Through  
pride Adam fell, and therefore by lowli-  
ness must Christ be exalted. "An haugh-  
ty spirit goeth before a fall; but before  
honour is Humility".

In this state of meekness and lowliness,  
was Christ to gain a complete victory  
over the enemies of man's salvation. The  
warfare was new, and it is no wonder, that  
the weapons employed in it should be un-  
common. Other warriors prepare their  
horses and their chariots, their bows, their  
spears, and their shields. But Messiah dis-  
arms his followers, in order that they may  
overcome. For thus our prophet goes on;

P Prov. XVIII. 12.

" And

DISC. "And I will cut off the chariot from

v. "Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem,

— "and the battle bow shall be cut off: And

"he shall speak peace unto the heathen."

Could a plainer declaration have been made, that the conquests of Messiah were not to be of a secular nature; that his kingdom was not of this world? "If my kingdom were of this world, saith he himself, "then would my servants fight<sup>1</sup>." But lo, he taketh from them the weapons of war. Was there a shield or sword seen among the thousands of the Israel of God? No shield, but that of faith; no sword, but that of the Spirit. Like their great leader, they encountered their adversaries with patience, and overcame by suffering. So far was the advent of Christ from carrying with it any appearance of war, that the nations at the time lay hushed in the tranquillity of an universal peace. "He "spake peace to the heathen," as well as to his own people the Jews. The waves of this troublesome world ceased to toss

<sup>1</sup> John xviii. 36.

themselves,

themselves, and a delightful calm seemed DISC.  
to forebode the approach of those halcyon V.  
days, when the Prince of Peace should  
make his abode amongst us ; like the still-  
ness of that hallowed night, on which the  
angelic choir descended, to sing “ Peace  
“ on earth ;” peace with God, by the par-  
don of sin ; peace with ourselves, by the  
answer of a clear conscience ; peace with  
one another, by mutual charity. O di-  
vine Peace, how lovely and how pleasant  
dost thou appear ! How happy and hea-  
venly is the kingdom of Messiah, where  
thou art to be found ! Who would not  
wish to see, who would not labour to pro-  
mote the full accomplishment of the last  
clause of the prophecy we have been con-  
sidering, in the extension of this kingdom  
and dominion of Christ “ from sea to sea,  
“ and from the river to the ends of the  
“ earth ;” that so all the nations of the  
world might remember themselves, and turn  
to the Lord Jesus, as many did at the  
first preaching of his Gospel. And let the  
daughter of Zion lead the way, restored  
to

DISC. to her pre-eminence among the churches.

- v. We will not envy her the honour, as she  
— formerly envied us Gentiles, but rather rejoice and shout with her, in the day when she shall be led to acknowledge her King; the King of Righteousness, Salvation, and Peace; the once lowly, but now highly exalted Jesus of Nazareth; who, as at this time, came to visit us in great humility, and shall come again, at the appointed hour, to judge the world; when we shall behold him, glorious as Jerusalem herself can wish, riding upon the heavens in power and majesty unutterable, amidst the acclamations of saints and angels.

## DISCOURSE VI.

## THE KING OF GLORY.

## REV. I. 7.

*Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him; and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*

**I**T is the peculiar supputation of the **DISC.**  
 Christian church, as a pious writer well **VI.**  
 observes, to begin the year, and to com-  
 mence the annual course of her services,  
 at this time of Advent, herein differing  
 from all other accounts of time whatso-  
 ever.

DISC. ever. The reason of which seems plainly  
 VI. to be this, because in the numbering her  
 — days, and measuring her seasons, she does  
 not so much regard the sun in the firma-  
 ment, as the great Sun of Righteousness,  
 her Lord and Saviour who is in heaven.  
 She considers herself as “redeemed from  
 “the earth;” and therefore no longer con-  
 fined to the calculations of the world, or  
 obliged to direct herself by the courses of  
 the material luminaries. It is her employ-  
 ment to make known to her children the  
 time of salvation, called in Scripture, “the  
 “year of the redeemed;” and this year  
 was introduced by the everlasting day-spring  
 from on high visiting her; whereby she  
 became, what the Spirit styles her, in the  
 Revelation, “a city that has no need of  
 “the sun, neither of the moon to shine in  
 “it, for the Lord God and the Lamb are  
 “the light and the glory thereof.”

The lessons and services therefore for the  
 four first Sundays in her liturgical year pro-  
 pose to our meditations the twofold Advent  
 of

of our Lord Jesus Christ, teaching us that **Disc.**  
it is he who was to come, and did come, **VI.**  
to redeem the world; and that it is he  
also, who shall come again, to be our  
judge. These two Advents involve in them  
and comprehend between them the whole  
counsel of God for the redemption of man-  
kind, by the coming of Christ in the flesh,  
with the final issue of that counsel in re-  
spect of each individual, to be manifested  
at his coming to judgment.

The end proposed by the church, in set-  
ting these two appearances of Christ toge-  
ther before us, at this time, is, to beget in  
our minds proper dispositions to celebrate  
the one, and expect the other; that so,  
with joy and thankfulness, we may now  
“go to Bethlehem, and see this thing  
“which is come to pass, which the Lord  
“hath made known unto us,” even the  
Son of God come to visit us in great hu-  
mility; and thence, with faith unfeigned,  
and hope immoveable, ascend in heart and  
mind to meet the same Son of God in the

**DISC.** air, coming in glorious majesty, to judge  
**VI.** the quick and dead.

---

And certainly, if any thing can lead men to repentance, and turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of that Just One, the wisdom which maketh wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus, it must be the united considerations of his mercy, and his justice: his infinite mercy during the day of grace, when all sins, that can be repented of, are forgiven unto men; his inexorable justice at the day of retribution, when he shall infallibly render unto every man according as his work shall be. And perhaps there is no better method of stirring up our wills to procure an interest, or of discovering the interest we already possess in the love of Christ, than by viewing in their proper colours the terrors of his judgment, as they will shew themselves to the astonished world at that awful hour of his second Advent; when the mask put upon false principles and evil actions shall drop off, and all things be estimated by the measures

measures of Christianity, and the standard **Disc.**  
of the Gospel of Jesus. **VI.**

The words of the divine and well beloved John now read are, it is presumed, not improper for this purpose, as they evidently fall in with the design of our church at this season, and speak the same language with her Advent services — “Behold, he  
“ cometh with clouds, and every eye shall  
“ see him, and they also that pierced him;  
“ and all the kindreds of the earth shall  
“ wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”

In these words we may observe,

I. Christ’s Advent to judgment, with the manner of it; “Behold, he  
“ cometh with clouds.”

II. The circumstance of the world’s beholding him, and the effect it shall produce; “Every eye shall  
“ see him, and they also that  
“ pierced him, and all the kindreds  
“ of the earth shall wail because of  
“ him.”

DISC.

VI.  

---

III. The faith and hope of the church, displayed by her wishing and praying for his manifestation, notwithstanding all the terrors that are to attend it; "Even so. Amen."

I. Then we are to consider Christ's Advent to judgment. There is something wonderfully awful and affecting in the short description the text gives us of it. The beautiful manner, particularly, in which it is introduced, is worthy notice. St. John, having occasion to mention his dear Lord and master, at whose command he wrote this epistle to the churches, fired and transported at the glorious name, runs on with amazing rapidity, enumerating the blessings of the Redemption which is by him; and having carried him from his cross to his throne, and ascribed all glory to him sitting upon it, immediately he sees him in the clouds, and breaks forth in the words of the text. The whole passage runs thus; "John to the seven churches, which are in Asia, Grace be unto you, and peace from

“ from him which is and which was, and  
“ which is to come; and from the seven  
“ spirits which are before his throne; and  
“ from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful  
“ witness, and the first begotten from the  
“ dead, and the prince of the kings of the  
“ earth; unto him that loved us, and  
“ washed us from our sins in his own  
“ blood, and hath made us kings and  
“ priests unto God and his father; unto  
“ him be glory and dominion for ever and  
“ ever. Amen.—Behold, he cometh!” It  
is evident likewise at first sight, how well  
this sudden and abrupt introduction is cal-  
culated to awaken our attention to what  
follows. “The corruptible body, alas,  
“ presseth down the soul that museth on  
“ many things,” and especially when it  
museth on the things of eternity. Multi-  
tudes lie asleep in their sins, amused with  
delusive dreams; dead to their true views  
and interests as a corpse sleeping in the dust  
is dead to the views and interests of this life.  
Therefore the Holy Spirit, about to make  
proclamation of Christ’s second Advent,

**DISC.** first sounds a trumpet in Sion, and an alarm  
**VI.** in the holy mountain, and ushers it in with  
 an emphatical—*Behold!* which, like the  
 voice of that wakeful bird that gives the  
 first notice of the approach of the morn-  
 ing, and as a prelude to the Archangel's  
 trump, which is to give notice of the ap-  
 proach of the last morning that shall ever  
 rise upon the world, is designed to awaken  
 a careless and indolent generation out of  
 it's lethargy, importing the same in this  
 place, with those other frequent calls of  
 the apostles and prophets—"Awake, thou  
 " that sleepest, and arise from the dead,  
 " and Christ shall give thee light. Arise,  
 " shine, for thy light is coming, and the  
 " glory of the Lord is rising upon thee."

"Behold, he cometh!" And is not this  
 a sight most worthy of our attention? Is  
 it not very meet, right and our bounden  
 duty, that we should behold it? That we  
 should open the eyes of our faith, which  
 the bewitching cup of pleasure and vanity,  
 mingled by a deceitful world for our de-  
 struction,

struction, has charmed to sleep? That we should "lift up our heads, and look up, to see our redemption drawing nigh?" For draw nigh it will, and it does, whether we consider it, or not. Every evening takes a day from the world's duration. The portion of the wicked is so much less, and the time of their punishment so much approached. The sufferings of the patient so much diminished, and their hopes of deliverance so much increased. Nay, every clock that strikes bids us recollect, that the promise of Christ has then received an additional force; "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." The precise day and hour knoweth no man. Though probably, as it was at his first Advent, so likewise will it be at his second. The faithful servants, who are watching for the return of their Lord, and "looking for redemption in Jerusalem," will be able, by the books of the Scriptures, and the signs of the times, to tell when the day is approaching. But what

DISC.  
VI.  

---

**DISC.** avails a curious disquisition upon the exact  
**VI.** period of the worlds dissolution? What is  
 likely to be the fate of those malefactors, who instead of preparing for their trial, spend the small portion of time allotted them, in disputing with each other concerning the hour in which the trumpet shall sound, and the judge make his entry? In this, above all other cases, "blessed is the man that feareth always. Blessed is that servant, who, whether his master cometh at the second watch, or whether he cometh at the third watch," is ready to receive him, and exhibit his accounts. Blessed, in short, is he, and he only, who hears continually these words of the beloved John; "Behold, he cometh."

He cometh, indeed! But how changed? How different his appearance from what it once was? How shall we be able to conceive of it as it deserves, to raise our thoughts from the voice of the tender babe in the manger, bewailing our sins that brought him thither, to the voice of the Son  
 of

of God, from which the heavens and the earth shall fly away, and no place be found for them any more for ever! Yet so it is. Behold, he who came in swaddling clothes, cometh with clouds. He who came to preach the day of salvation, cometh again to proclaim the day of vengeance. He who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, leads his ten thousands to the prey, as the lion of the tribe of Judah. He who cried not, nor lifted up his voice against his enemies upon earth, thunders with the glorious voice of his excellency against them from heaven. He who never brake a bruised reed, rules the nations with a rod of iron, and breaks them in pieces like a potter's vessel. He who quenched not the smoking flax, extinguishes the great lights of the world; darkens the sun, and turns the moon into blood; commands the stars from their stations, and the dead from their graves; shakes the powers of heaven, and the foundations of the earth, and all hearts, that are not fixed on him.

The

DISC. The trumpet sounds, and he is coming!

VI. The everlasting gates of heaven, which  
— lifted up their heads for the King of Glory to enter in, are again lifted up; and behold the procession that comes forth of them, descending to this lower world, as it is described by one who saw it in vision. “I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true,” the accomplisher of all his promises; “and in righteousness he doth judge” the world, “and make war” against all that oppose him. “His eyes were as a flame of fire,” discerning and destroying the counsels of his adversaries; “and on his head were many crowns;” all the kingdoms of this world were become his; “and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself,” the ineffable name of the divine essence. “And he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood,” the garment of vengeance. “And his name,” by which he is known to men, “is called, THE WORD OF GOD. And the armies which were  
“ in

“in heaven followed him upon white **Disc.**  
“horses,” attending him in his glory, **VI.**  
“clothed in fine linen white and clean,”  
which is the righteousness of saints. “And  
“out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword,”  
namely, his holy word, “that with it he  
“should smite the nations. And he shall  
“rule them,” that have rejected the golden  
sceptre of mercy, “with a rod of iron.  
“And he treadeth the wine-press of the  
“fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.  
“And he hath on his vesture and on his  
“thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS,**  
“**AND LORD OF LORDS.**”

When Joshua, at the head of the armies of Israel, surrounded Jericho, at the sound of the trumpet, the walls fell flat. When the divine Joshua, at the head of the armies of the true Israel of God, the church triumphant, surrounds this city of destruction, can the event be otherwise? Assuredly it cannot. The strength, beauty, and glory of the world will fall, and come to nothing, at the moment when the trumpet,

DISC. pet, sounding from the one end of heaven  
VI. to the other, shall give notice, that the  
judge of all the earth is coming to his  
judgment-seat in the air. The throne that  
shall be there erected for him is thus described by Daniel — “ I beheld till the  
“ thrones were cast down, and the antient  
“ of days did sit ; whose garment was  
“ white as snow, and the hair of his head  
“ like the pure wool. His throne was like  
“ the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire ; a fiery stream issued, and came  
“ forth from before him : thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before  
“ him. The judgment was set, and the  
“ books were opened.” In the clouds over our heads is this judgment-seat to be formed, as it is also written in the book of Psalms — “ Clouds and darkness are round  
“ about him, righteousness and judgment  
“ are the habitation of his throne.” From amidst this thick darkness the lightnings, those swift executioners of divine vengeance, shall flash abroad over the earth  
while

while ten thousand thunders, rolling forth **DISC.**  
from the glorious God that maketh them, **VI.**  
shall at once utter their tremendous voices :  
as it is written again in the same book of  
Psalms—" Our God shall come, and shall  
" not keep silence," as once, when like a  
sheep dumb before his shearers he opened  
not his mouth. " A fire shall now devour  
" before him, and it shall be very tempest-  
" tuous round about him. The Lord," even  
the Lord Jesus, " shall thunder out of hea-  
" ven, and the highest give his thunder,  
" hail stones and coals of fire." By the  
brightness of his coming all enemies shall  
soon be consumed, all clouds shall pass away;  
and the judge shall appear upon his radiant  
throne, like his emblem the sun; so that  
there shall not be a tongue but must own  
with the church, in her triumphant song,  
" Heaven and earth are full of the majesty  
" of thy glory." And as Christ upon his  
throne, like the sun, will see all, so, like  
the sun, he will be seen of all; which  
brings us to the

DISC. II<sup>d</sup> Thing to be considered, namely,  
 VI. The circumstance of mankind beholding  
 him, with the effect it shall produce upon  
 them; "Every eye shall see him, and they  
 "also that pierced him, and all the kin-  
 "dreds of the earth shall wail because of  
 "him."

The judge being seated on his throne, and all things subdued to him, "before  
 "him, shall be gathered all nations," all the innumerable multitudes of men and women that have lived in every age, and every country. Every eye shall see the God that made it, and commanded it to be pure, and single. How it has fulfilled his commandment, will then be known. The Sight of Christ upon his throne will be a trying sight; the effects of it will enter the heart like the piercings of a sword, and reveal all it's thoughts in the countenance; hypocrisy shall then be no more. "Every eye shall see him." But who shall be able to endure the sight? Even "they that pierced him" must "look  
 "on

“on him whom they pierced.” Pilate will D I S C.  
behold the poor, despised Galilean, whom VI.  
he scourged, and delivered to be crucified, 

---

  
now ready to judge him, and all the world.  
Herod and his men of war, who mocked  
and set him at nought, will see him en-  
compassed with ten thousands of saints and  
angels, about to speak unto them in his  
wrath, and trouble them in his sore dis-  
pleasure. A corrupt temporizing Sanhe-  
drim, who were instant with loud voices  
that he might be crucified, will see heaven  
and earth fly away from before the face of  
that priest, of whom they, his represen-  
tatives, were the betrayers and murderers.  
They who platted and put on the crown  
of thorns, shall be struck blind with rays  
of glory beaming from his sacred head.  
And they who drove the nails, and he who  
thrust the spear into his side, shall see that  
same Jesus, whom they pierced, exalted  
above every name that is named in heaven  
and earth.

But think not that the Jews, who cru-  
cified

DISC. cified Christ, are the only persons that will

VI. have reason to tremble at this sight. There  
 — are others, who may dread it, as well as they. Those, whose sins, yet unrepented of, sharpened the nails, and pointed every thorn. Those careless ones, who are at ease; whose hearts, harder than the rocks, that rent asunder at his crucifixion, remain unmoved at the sight of the Son of God, dying upon the cross for them, and calling from thence to a thoughtless world — “Is  
 “it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?  
 “Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow  
 “like unto my sorrow which is done unto  
 “me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted  
 “me in the day of his fierce anger.”

Bishop Taylor, in one of his Advent sermons, has an exhortation with a sinner upon this subject, which is so just, beautiful, and affecting, and so infinitely beyond any thing I can offer, that I shall not only have your pardon, but your thanks, for reciting it. “It was for thy sake that the  
 “judge did suffer unspeakable pains, such

“as

“ as were sufficient to reconcile all the  
“ world to God. And to consider that thou  
“ hast, for thy own particular, made all  
“ this in vain and ineffective? that Christ  
“ thy Lord and judge should be tormented  
“ for nothing; that thou wouldest not ac-  
“ cept felicity and pardon, when he pur-  
“ chased them at so dear a price; it must  
“ needs be an infinite condemnation to  
“ thee. How shalt thou look upon him  
“ that fainted and died for love of thee,  
“ and thou didst scorn his miraculous mer-  
“ cies? How shalt thou dare to behold  
“ that holy face which brought salvation  
“ to thee, and thou didst turn away, and  
“ fall in love with death, and deformity,  
“ and sin? And yet, in the beholding that  
“ face consists much of the glories of  
“ eternity. Surely all the pains and the  
“ passions, the sorrows and the groans, the  
“ humility and poverty, the labours and  
“ the watchings, the prayers and the fer-  
“ mons, the miracles and the prophecies,  
“ the whip and the nails, the death and  
“ the burial, the shame and the smart, the

DISC. "cross and the grave of Jesus, shall be laid

VI. "upon thy score, if thou hast refused the  
 "mercies and design of all their holy ends  
 "and purposes. And if thou rememberest  
 "what a calamity that was, which broke  
 "the Jewish nation in pieces, when Christ  
 "came to judge them, for their murdering  
 "him, who was their king, and the prince  
 "of life; and considerest, that this was  
 "but a dark image of the terrors of the  
 "day of judgment, thou mayest then ap-  
 "prehend, that there is some strange un-  
 "speakable evil in store for one who re-  
 "fuses the salvation of Jesus, and rather  
 "chuses that Satan should rejoice in his  
 "destruction, than that Jesus should tri-  
 "umph in his felicity."

Thus far this excellent prelate. And all who consider the matter in this it's true and proper light, cannot wonder at the effect which, as St. John in the text tells us, the sight of Christ will produce among the kindreds of the earth. They shall wail because of Christ, when they see him  
 whom

whom they have pierced by their sins, and crucified afresh. And that wailing must needs be terrible, when millions of men and women shall at the same instant fearfully cry out, and the noise shall mingle with the trumpet of the Archangel, and the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens passing away with a great noise, and the roaring of the flames in which the earth and all the works that are therein shall then be dissolving. The terror and lamentation throughout the world at that time, with the foreboding pangs and convulsions of departing nature, will be such as never were, since the day that God created man upon the earth. Include in your idea the destruction of the old world by the flood, the overthrow of the cities of the plain by fire and brimstone, and the desolation of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, with an assemblage of the plagues of Egypt, and the miseries and calamities felt by men in all ages, yet your conceptions will fall as far short of the things themselves, as the shadow does of

DISC.

VI.

**Disc.** the substance. Nothing can exceed our  
**VI.** blessed Lord's description of this last scene,  

---

but it's actual accomplishment—"There  
" shall be signs in the sun, and in the  
" moon, and in the stars; and upon the  
" earth distress of nations, with perplexity,  
" the sea and the waves roaring; men's  
" hearts failing them for fear, and for  
" looking after those things which are com-  
" ing on the earth; for the powers of  
" heaven shall be shaken. And then shall  
" appear the sign of the son of man in  
" heaven; and then shall all the tribes of  
" the earth mourn, and they shall see the  
" son of man coming in the clouds of hea-  
" ven, with power and great glory." At  
this most awful and tremendous hour, when  
the son of man shall display his banner the  
cross in the clouds; when the sea and the  
waters of the great deep shall roar; when  
the destroying angel shall again go forth at  
midnight into the land of Egypt, and  
there shall be a great cry throughout all  
the land, because of death and judgment;  
then shall be brought to pass that which is  
written

written in the Revelation; "I beheld  
"when the kings of the earth, and the  
"great men, and the rich men, and the  
"chief captains, and the mighty men, and  
"every bondman, and every freeman hid  
"themselves in the dens, and in the rocks  
"of the mountains, and said to the moun-  
"tains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us  
"from the face of him that sitteth on the  
"throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.  
"For the great day of his wrath is come,  
"and who shall be able to stand?"

A view of the terrors of the Lord has  
by this time, perhaps, made us all rea-  
dy to join in asking this last question?  
"Who shall be able to stand?" And we  
cannot help taking up our parable with  
Balaam; "Alas! who shall live, when  
"God doth this?" But thanks be to God,  
an answer will be abundantly ministered  
unto us by a consideration of the

III<sup>d</sup> And last point proposed, namely,  
the faith and hope of the church, who

DISC. wishes for Christ's manifestation, notwithstanding all the terrors that are to attend it, as appears by the remaining words of my text—"Even so. Amen."

For these are not the words of St. John only, but they carry in them the prayers and sighs of Christians, sent up to the throne of grace through him. It is not "the Spirit" alone, speaking by him, that says "Come," but "the bride," or church, also says the same. "How long, O Lord, "holy and true," is the voice of the departed spirits, resting from their labours under the altar in heaven, and waiting for the completion of their glory, at the day of their Redeemer's triumph. And that part of the church which is still militant, and sojourns in the wilderness, may be heard earnestly joining in the same expostulation, in the LXIV<sup>th</sup> chapter of the prophet Isaiah; "O that thou wouldest rent  
 "the heavens, that thou wouldest come  
 "down, that the mountains might flow  
 "down at thy presence; as when the  
 "melting

“ melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the Disc.

“ waters to boil ; to make thy name known VI.

“ to thine adversaries, that the nations may

“ tremble at thy presence. When former-

“ ly thou didst terrible things, which we

“ looked not for, thou camest down, the

“ mountains flowed down at thy presence.”

Nay, we ourselves, every one of us, daily put up the very same petition to God,

when we pray that “ his kingdom may

“ come:” for his kingdom of glory cannot

come, till all these things shall have been

brought to pass. And again, when, standing

at the grave’s mouth, we have before our eyes

a plain proof, that “ man, who is born of a

“ woman, hath but a short time to live”

in this world ; we earnestly beseech the

Father of Spirits, “ that it would please

“ him of his gracious goodness shortly to

“ accomplish the number of his elect, and

“ to hasten his kingdom.” Thus the com-

ing of that day, in which “ all the kin-

“ dreds of the earth shall wail,” is the

constant subject of the wishes and prayers

of the sons of God. A sound Christian

DISC. faith gives them confidence towards God,  
VI. and teaches them, without hypocrisy, to  

---

pray for the second Advent of Christ. For  
although in that day "he cometh with  
"clouds," yet God's promise is, that when-  
ever "he brings his cloud" over the earth,  
his "bow shall be in the cloud," the sure  
token of the "everlasting covenant of mer-  
"cy between him and all flesh." And ac-  
cordingly, when Ezekiel and St. John saw  
Christ upon his terrible throne, he appeared  
incompassed with a RAINBOW, to teach us  
that even the throne of judgment is incir-  
cled by mercy, which rejoices against judg-  
ment. All the cries of despairing nations,  
the thunders of heaven, and the horrible  
noises of the perishing earth shall not keep  
those, who have been indeed the disciples  
of Jesus, from hearing a voice saying unto  
them, "Come up hither." Yea, and they  
who in faith and patience have waited for  
the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah speaks,  
"shall then renew their strength, they  
"shall mount up as eagles." They shall  
ascend to meet their Redeemer in the air,  
and

and the eye of faith shall steadfastly behold DISC.  
the glories of the Sun of Righteousness. VI.

---

Marvel no longer then that the church so passionately desires the manifestation of Christ. Marvel not that she should say, COME! when the Advent of him to whom she speaks is to be the day of her espousals, and the day of the gladness of her heart; the end of her Saviour's sufferings, and her faith; a day of triumph, and everlasting felicity. Let the men of the world lament, for their joy is ended, and their sorrows beginning; but let the redeemed be glad, for their sorrows are at an end, and their joys beginning. Let the "tribes of the earth mourn," but "let Israel rejoice in him that made him, and let the children of Sion be joyful in their king." For the trumpet which proclaims the destruction of the ungodly, declares at the same time the salvation of the righteous. When that *trumpet* sounds throughout the land, the eternal *jubilee* is begun. There is liberty for the captives, and the opening of the prison doors, even the gates of the grave,  
for

DISC. for those to come out, who lie there in  
 VI. darkness, and in the shadow of death; and  
 — every child of God is free to return to his  
 possession and inheritance, and to the family  
 of his heavenly Father. When they  
 who have loved the world, instead of him  
 whom the world crucified, and trusted in  
 the false glory and riches of earthly Babylon,  
 shall “stand weeping and wailing, to  
 “see the smoke of her burning, saying,  
 “Alas, alas, that great city, that was  
 “clothed in purple, and fine linen, and  
 “scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious  
 “stones; how in one hour is so  
 “great riches come to nought?” — What  
 saith the Spirit to the church? “Rejoice  
 “over her, thou heaven, and ye holy Apostles  
 “and Prophets, for God hath avenged  
 “you on her.” And what saith the church  
 herself? “The kingdoms of this world  
 “are become the kingdoms of our Lord  
 “and his Christ, and he shall reign for  
 “ever and ever. Hallelujah, for the Lord  
 “God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be  
 “glad, and rejoice, and give honour to  
 “him;

“him: for the marriage of the Lamb is **Disc.**  
“come, and his wife hath made herself **VI.**  
“ready.”

---

And now, my brethren, whose heart does not burn within him, when he hears the melody of the celestial choir chanting forth the praises of their victorious Redeemer, round his glorious throne? Is there a single person here, whose soul has not a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord, and to bear his part in the never-ending chorus? But know, O man, whosoever thou art, that hast this desire and longing, know thou must be a penitent upon earth, before thou canst be a saint in heaven. Thou must be holy in time, if thou wouldest be glorious in eternity. Acquaint now therefore thyself with God, and be at peace with him, thyself, and all mankind; thereby, and thereby only, shall good come unto thee at thy latter end. Stop not thine ears, and harden not thine heart against instruction, when it is the day of trial and probation  
in

DISC. in the wilderness. Receive now, I pray  
VI. thee, the law of the most High; retire, and  
meditate upon it, and lay up his words in  
thy heart; nor suffer the world to rob thee  
of that wisdom which is more precious  
than rubies, and to which all the things  
thou canst desire are not to be compared.  
Fear not, neither be dismayed, because of  
the multitude of thy past transgressions,  
which present themselves to thy troubled  
conscience, and set themselves in array a-  
gainst thee. God can forgive, if thou canst  
repent. Nay, he will "give thee repentance  
unto life," if thou wilt request it of him.  
If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt  
yet be built up, and, impossible as it may  
appear, thou shalt put away iniquity far  
from thy tabernacle: thou shalt cease to do  
evil, and learn to do good: thou shalt cast  
off the works of darkness, and put on the  
armour of light, now in the time of this  
mortal life: thou shalt have thy delight in  
the Almighty, and lift up thy face unto  
God: thou shalt make thy prayer unto  
him, and he shall hear thee; he shall not  
lay

lay thy sins to thy charge, but forgive thee **DISC.**  
what is past, and give thee grace to amend **VI.**  
thy sinful life; to decline from the ways  
of the destroyer, in which, perhaps, thou  
hast unhappily wandered, and incline to  
the paths of wisdom and righteousness, and  
walk therein before him all the days of thy  
life. And when the work shall be finished,  
for which God sent thee into the world,  
even the work of thy salvation, thou wilt  
perceive, that to depart and to be with  
Christ is far better than to live here in pos-  
session of all that the world can give thee.  
Thou shalt go out with joy, and be led  
forth with peace by angels, who shall con-  
vey and welcome thy spirit to the regions  
of the living, to the bosoms of our holy  
fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whence  
sorrow, grief, and lamentation are banished  
away, where the light of God's countenance  
visits and shines continually. And when  
the trumpet shall sound, and all the tribes  
and kindreds of the earth shall wail, thou  
shalt lift up thy voice and sing for the majesty  
and glory of thy triumphant Lord, and call  
to

DISC. to the heavens and the earth to bear thee

VI. company—"Let the heavens rejoice, and

"let the earth be glad; let the sea make a

"noise, and all that is therein; let the

"field be joyful, and all that is in it; then

"shall all the trees of the wood rejoice be-

"fore the Lord; for he cometh, for he

"cometh to judge the earth, and with

"righteousness to judge the world, and the

"people with his truth. He which testifieth

"these things saith, Surely I come quickly,

"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

## DISCOURSE VII.

## THE WORD INCARNATE.

JOHN i. 14.

*The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.*

**I**N contemplating the character of man's **DISC.**  
 Redeemer, it is hard to say, whether **VII.**  
 our admiration be most excited by the natural dignity, or the voluntary abasement of his person. To form suitable ideas of either, it is expedient to take a view of both. And they appear to the utmost advantage in the exordium of St. John's Gospel, where he setteth himself to publish, first, the Divinity, and then the incarnation

DISC. tion of his most adorable and beloved Master. He mentions in due order, and regular gradation, the glory which the word had with the Father before man, or the world which he now inhabits, had a being; "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"—His glory, with respect to the creatures, the works of his hands; "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made"—His glory, as the sole author of life and immortality; "In him was life, and the life was the light of men"—His glory, with respect to man in general, as fallen into a state of ignorance and sensuality; "And the light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not"—His glory, with respect to the Jews, to whom he first manifested himself; "He came unto his own, and his own received him not"—His glory, with respect to Christians; "To as many as believed on him gave he power to become the sons of God;" in order

to

to effect which he himself became the Son DISC.  
of man; "The Word was made flesh, VII.  
"and dwelt among us, and we beheld his  
"glory, the glory as of the only begotten  
"of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Can any thing be more truly noble and sublime than the former part of the Evangelist's discourse, more pleasing and acceptable than the latter, descending from the loftiest of speculations on the Divine Nature of the Word, to display the benefits of his advent in the flesh; like the Nile, when, rolling from the heights of the Nubian mountains, it diffuseth riches and plenteousness over all the land of Egypt?

The union of two natures in the person of our Lord, which may justly be considered as the source of every blessing we enjoy in time, or hope to enjoy in eternity, is expressed by St. John in these terms, "The Word was made flesh<sup>a</sup>," each of which will be found worthy our attention.

<sup>a</sup> Ο λογος σαρξ εναντη.

DISC. The Term *Word* (*λογος*) was in use  
 VII. among the ancient philosophers, who some-  
 times speak of a person under that appella-  
 tion, as the maker of the universe. So Ter-  
 tullian informs the Gentiles.<sup>b</sup> And Euse-  
 bius, in the xi<sup>th</sup> book of his Evangelical  
 Preparation, cites a Passage from Amelius,  
 a celebrated admirer and imitator of Plato,  
 in which he speaks of the *λογος* as being  
 eternal and the maker of all things. This,  
 he says, was the opinion of Heraclitus;  
 and then introduces the beginning of the  
 Gospel of St. John; concerning whom, it  
 seems, he was wont to complain, that he  
 had transferred into his book the senti-  
 ments of his master Plato.

But it is not likely that our Evangelist  
 either borrowed from, or intended to copy  
 after Plato. And since not only Plato, but  
 Pythagoras and Zeno likewise, conversed  
 with the Jews, it is not at all wonderful,

<sup>b</sup> "Apud vestros quoque sapientes *λογος*, id est Sermo-  
 "nem atque Rationem, constat artificem videri univerfi-  
 "tatis. Hunc enim Zeno determinat facitorem, qui  
 "cuncta in dispositione formaverit."

that

that we meet with something about a DISC.  
ΘΕΙΟΣ ΛΟΓΟΣ, or DIVINE WORD, in their VII.  
writings. Nor, after all, might the philo-  
sopher and the apostle use the same term  
in the same acceptation.

It is customary with the writers of the New Testament to express themselves, as much as may be, in the language of the Old, to which, therefore, we must have recourse for an explanation of their meaning, as the penmen of both, under the direction of one Spirit, used their terms in the same sense.

Now, upon looking into the Old Testament, we find, that “the Word of Jehovah,” is frequently and evidently the style of a *person*, who is said “to come,” “to be revealed or manifested,” and the like. As in the xv<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis; “After these things, the Word of Jehovah came unto Abraham in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abraham; I am thy shield,

דבר יהוה.

N 2

“ and

DISC. "and thy exceeding great reward. And  
 VII. "Abraham said, Lord God, what wilt  
 — "thou give me, &c."—"Behold the Word  
 "of the Lord came unto him, saying,  
 "This shall not be thine heir—and he  
 "brought him forth abroad, &c." Thus  
 again, 1 Sam. III. "Jehovah revealed him-  
 "self to Samuel in Shiloh by the Word  
 "of Jehovah." The same person is, at  
 other times, characterized by the title,  
 "the Name of Jehovah<sup>d</sup>," as in Isaiah  
 xxx. 27. "Behold the Name of Jehovah  
 "cometh from far, burning with his an-  
 "ger, &c."

With regard to the nature of the per-  
 son thus denominated, whoever shall duly  
 consider the attributes, powers, and actions  
 ascribed to him, will see reason to think of  
 him not as of a created intelligence, but a  
 person of the divine essence, possessed of  
 all it's incommunicable properties. And  
 it may be noticed, that the Targums, or  
 Chaldee Paraphrasts, continually substitute

שם יהוה<sup>d</sup>.

the

the Word of Jehovah<sup>c</sup>, for Jehovah<sup>f</sup>, ascribing divine characters to the person so named. And the antient grecizing Jews speak in the same style. Thus in that excellent apocryphal book of Wisdom, ix. 1.  
 " O God who hast made all things <sup>εὐ</sup> ΛΟΓΩ  
 " σου by thy Word:" and again, in the passage, which so wonderfully describes the horrors of that night, never to be forgotten by an Israelite, wherein the first born of the Egyptians were slain—" While all  
 " things were in quiet silence, and that  
 " night was in the midst of her swift  
 " course, thine Almighty WORD (ΛΟΓΟΣ)  
 " leaped down from heaven, out of thy  
 " royal throne, as a fierce man of war into  
 " the midst of a land of destruction; and  
 " brought thine unfeigned commandment,  
 " as a sharp sword; and standing up, filled  
 " all things with death; and it touched  
 " the heaven, but it stood upon the earth."

Chap. xviii. 14.

But whatever may be thought of these passages, certain it is, that when St. John

<sup>c</sup> "מימרא ד."

<sup>f</sup> יהוה.

DISC. comes to treat of this WORD, although,   
VII. to shew a distinction of personality, he first tells us, "The Word was with God;" yet, to prevent all mistakes on the other side of the question, he instantly adds, "And the Word was God;" thus evidently asserting an unity of essence.

And let any impartial man only lay together, upon this subject, and duly weigh the few following particulars; that St. John tells us, "The Word was God," and "The Word was made flesh;" that St. Paul says, "God was manifest in the flesh; God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself; and in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" that our Saviour is styled JEHOVAH, a name appropriated to the Deity; that he says of himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last"—I am he that search-

<sup>2</sup> Upon this passage, which is found Rev. 1. 11. Dr. DODDRIDGE has the following Note — "That these titles (which occur just above in ver. 8.) should be repeated so soon in a connection which demonstrates they are given to Christ, will appear very remarkable, whatever sense  
 " be

“eth the hearts and reins;” that he creat- DISC.  
ed the world by his power, redeemed it VII.  
by his mercy, governs it by his provi-  
dence, and shall judge it in righteousness;  
let any impartial man, I say, consider these  
things with the attention they deserve, and  
determine for himself, concerning the na-  
ture and dignity of him, who was incar-  
nate for our salvation.

Should it be asked, why this person is  
styled the WORD? the proper answer  
seems to be, that as a thought, or concep-  
tion of the understanding, is brought forth  
and communicated in *speech*, or *discourse*,  
so is the divine will made known by the  
WORD, who is the offspring and emana-  
tion of the eternal mind; an emanation  
pure and undivided, like that of light,

“be given to the eighth verse. The argument drawn in  
“the preceding note upon it, would have been strong,  
“wherever such a passage as this had been found; but it’s  
“immediate connection with this, greatly strengthens it.  
“And I cannot forbear recording it, that this text has  
“done more than any other in the Bible, towards pre-  
“venting me from giving into that scheme, which would  
“make our Lord Jesus Christ no more than a deified  
“creature.”

**DISC.** which is the proper issue of the sun, and  
**VII.** yet coeval with its parent orb; since the  
 sun cannot be supposed, by the most exact  
 and philosophical imagination, to exist a  
 moment, without emitting light; and were  
 the one eternal, the other, though strictly  
 and properly produced by it, would be as  
 strictly and properly coeternal with it. So  
 true is the assertion of the Nicene fathers;  
 so apt the instance subjoined for its illus-  
 tration; "God of God, light of light:"  
 in apostolical language, "The brightness  
 of his Father's glory, and the express  
 image of his person<sup>a</sup>." And whether  
 we consider our Lord under the idea of the  
 WORD, or that of LIGHT, it will lead us  
 to the same conclusion, respecting his of-  
 fice. For as no man can discover the mind  
 of another, but by the word which pro-  
 ceedeth from him; as no man can see the  
 sun, but by the light which itself emit-  
 teth; even so, "No man knoweth the  
 Father, save the Son, and him to whom-  
 soever the Son will reveal him<sup>i</sup>."

<sup>a</sup> *Ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως.*

<sup>i</sup> *Matth. xi. 27.*

This glorious WORD, this uncreated DISC.  
LIGHT, was united to our nature in the VII.  
person of Christ; "The Word was made  
"*flesh*." *Flesh*, which is a part of our na-  
ture, stands here for the whole; and being  
the baser part of the composition, seems  
purposely mentioned, to intimate, that the  
care and love of heaven extend even to  
that; that our bodies, no less than our spi-  
rits, are included in the scheme of redemp-  
tion; so that while the soul reposeth, in  
humble confidence, on the mercies of Je-  
sus, the *flesh* also may "rest in hope." In  
flesh, and by the instigation of flesh, the  
offence was committed. By taking flesh  
upon him, therefore, the great Physician,  
the sovereign healer of all our maladies,  
corrected the bad qualities of the fountain,  
that the streams might flow pure and salu-  
tary. In flesh the offence was committed,  
and therefore in flesh satisfaction must be  
made for it. Our High-Priest was incar-  
nate, that he might have something to of-  
fer, more valuable and efficacious than the  
flesh of bulls and calves. "Sacrifice and  
" offering

DISC. " offering thou wouldest not, but a body  
 VII. " hast thou prepared me. In burnt offer-  
 ings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had  
 " no pleasure; then said I, Lo I come (in  
 " the volume of the book it is written of  
 " me) to do thy will, O God<sup>k</sup>." The na-  
 ture that sinned, according to the rules of  
 justice, was to suffer for sin; and the Word  
 was made flesh for the same reason, that,  
 when so made, he was baptized by John,  
 " To fulfil all righteousness." " And as  
 " Christ took manhood, that by it he  
 " might be capable of death, whereunto  
 " he humbled himself; so, because man-  
 " hood is the proper subject of compassion  
 " and feeling pity, which maketh the  
 " sceptre of Christ's regency, even in the  
 " kingdom of heaven, to be amiable; he  
 " who, without our nature, could not on  
 " earth suffer for the sins of the world,  
 " doth now also, by means thereof, both  
 " make intercession to God for sinners, and  
 " exercise dominion over all men, with a

<sup>k</sup> Ps. xl. 6. Heb. x. 5.

" true,

“ true, a natural, and a sensible touch of Disc.  
“ pity<sup>1</sup>. ” VII.

---

As the Divinity is an object by no means within the grasp of the human understanding, it were absurd to expect an adequate idea of the mode of it's union with flesh, expressed in the text by the word “ made ” ; “ The Word was *made* flesh. ” It sufficeth, in this case, to maintain the general truth of the proposition against those, who, in different ways, by subtilty and sophistry, have laboured to oppugn and destroy it. We must not, with Arius, deny the Saviour to be truly God, because he became man ; nor assert, with Apollinaris, that he was not really man, because he was also God. We must not, with Nestorius, rend Christ asunder, and divide him into two persons ; nor, after the example of Eutyches, confound in his person those natures which should be distinguished. These were the four capital errors, which, in the ear-

<sup>1</sup> HOOKER, Ecclesiast. Polity, v. 51.

<sup>m</sup> ΕΥΥΓΓΟ.

**DISC.** **VII.** **—**lier ages, harrassed and distracted the Christian church, on the point of the incarnation; and in opposition to which, the four most famous antient general councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, were called. Whatever was by them decreed, either in declaration of Christian belief, or refutation of heresy, may all be comprized, as judicious Hooker well noteth, in four words, “truly, perfectly, indivisibly, distinctly”; truly God, perfectly man, indivisibly one person, distinctly two natures. “Within the compass of which four heads, saith he, I may truly affirm, that all heresies, which touch the person of Jesus Christ, (whether they have risen in these latter days, or in any age heretofore) may be with great facility brought to confine themselves.”

The apostle to the Hebrews, writing on the subject of the incarnation, thus expresseth himself, “He taketh not hold of

<sup>a</sup> Αληθως, τελως, αδιαριτως, ασυγχυτως.

<sup>b</sup> Book v. Sect. 54.

“angels,”

“angels, but he taketh hold of the seed DISC.  
 “of Abraham” ;” he took, or assumed the VII.  
 manhood into God. As the reasonable soul  
 and flesh is one man, so God and man is  
 one Christ. The soul is not turned into,  
 nor compounded with the body ; yet they  
 two, though distinct in nature, form one  
 man. The natures are preserved, without  
 confusion ; the person is entire, without  
 division<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, then, as the necessity of the case,  
 and the counsels of the most High re-  
 quired, “The Word was made flesh ;”  
 and, being made flesh, “dwelt amongst  
 “us ;” not appearing occasionally, as in  
 antient times, but making his abode with  
 his creatures ; “rejoicing in the habita-  
 “ble parts of the earth, and delighting  
 “to be with the sons of men ;” insomuch,

<sup>1</sup> Οὐ γὰρ ὅτις ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται, ἀλλὰ σπέρματος  
 Ἀβραάμ ἐπιλαμβάνεται.

<sup>1</sup> Sic factum est Caro, ut maneret Verbum ; non immu-  
 tando quod erat, sed assumendo quod non erat : nostra  
 auxit, sua non minuit ; nec sacramentum pietatis detri-  
 mentum Deitatis. CONCIL. CHALCED.

that

DISC. that we read of those, who were not afraid

VII. to ask him, "Master, where dwellest

— "thou?" and received this gracious an-

swer, "Come and see." "He pitched

"his tent among us," a stranger and a

sojourner, as his fathers were, concerning

whom it is the apostle's observation, that,

though the heirs of the promise, they lived

in tents, shifting from place to place, and

declaring, that here, on earth, they had

no permanent city, but looked for one to

come. The fleshly tabernacle, in which

he resided, at the close of his pilgrimage,

was to be taken down, in order afterwards

to be re-erected in a more glorious manner,

and for ever fixed at the right hand of

God; like the GLORY of old, which first

travelled with Israel through the wilderness

in a moveable tent, and then, at length,

rested in a durable temple, on the hill of

Sion. As the Captain of our salvation,

the Leader of the Israel of God, he pre-

ceded his people to the battle against their

spiritual enemies; and now, as King of

† ΕΣΧΗΜΩΣΕΝ ΕΝ ΗΜΙΝ.

Glory,

Glory, crowned with victory and honour, **Disc.**  
he is seated on his throne, holding forth **VII.**  
rewards to all his faithful soldiers and ser-  
vants, which they are to receive at his  
hands, when the days of their pilgrimage  
and warfare shall be ended.

But let us not imagine, that, even in  
the state of humiliation, his glory was al-  
together obscured by the veil, within which  
it dwelt; or that it's frequent irradiations  
were not sufficient to convince those who  
beheld the house, how illustrious a guest it  
had the honour to contain. Eye-witnesses  
have given a different account. "The  
" Word was made flesh, and dwelt among  
" us, and we beheld his glory, the glory  
" as of the only begotten of the Father."  
The sun was covered with a cloud; but it  
was the sun still; and often manifested,  
through the cloud, the power and bright-  
ness of it's beams.

That Christ was man, the labours and  
the sorrows, the stripes, the wounds, the  
pains,

DISC. pains, and the death, which, as man, he  
 VII. suffered, did fully attest. But they who  
 — saw the most boisterous elements in nature  
 cease from raging, and compose themselves  
 into a perfect calm, when he said, “Peace,  
 “be still; they who saw a foul and invete-  
 rate leprosy done away in a moment, by  
 the words, “Be clean;” they who saw a  
 body, that had been four days dead, arise  
 from it’s tomb, when he called, “Lazarus,  
 “come forth;” these might well ask,  
 “What manner of man is this, that even  
 “the winds and the sea,” disease, and death  
 itself, “obey him?” Outwardly indeed  
 he appears to be a man; but surely, under  
 that form, a celestial visitant is come a-  
 mong us. Is not this the Lord of nature?  
 Is not this man’s Almighty Redeemer?

When, at the marriage in Cana, he had  
 caused water to change it’s nature and pro-  
 perties, and to become wine, it is said,  
 “This beginning of miracles did Jesus in  
 “Cana of Galilee, and *manifested forth his*  
 “glory; and his disciples believed on him.”

But

But our Evangelist saw more. He was **DISC.**  
one of those, who attended their Master on **VII.**  
the mount of transfiguration, and to whom  
was vouchsafed a glimpse of that excellent  
glory, which the WORD "had with the  
"Father before the world was," and with  
which the humanity, by him assumed, is  
now for ever invested. The Divinity, en-  
shrined within, communicated it's radiance  
outwardly to the body, and even to the  
garments, till mortality seemed to be swal-  
lowed up of life; "His face did shine as  
"the sun, and his raiment was white as  
"the light." The "Lord our God be-  
"came exceeding glorious, he was clothed  
"with majesty and honour, he decked him-  
"self with light as it were with a gar-  
"ment."

And if we reflect upon the manner in  
which it pleased the Father to exalt and  
ennoble the most abasing circumstances of  
his life and death, by the choir of angels  
that descended to celebrate his birth; the  
new star which appeared in the skies, guid-

DISC. ing the eastern sages to Bethlehém ; the  
 VII. voice which answered him from heaven, in  
 the audience of the Jews ; the preternatural eclipse of the sun at his crucifixion ; recollecting, at the same time, the triumph of his resurrection, and the manner of his ascension in the presence of his disciples ; all these particulars conspire to declare the glory not of a servant, as Moses, but of a Son, of “ the only begotten ;” a glory not of magnificence only, or one beset with terrors, like that at Sinai, but bearing towards man, in every instance, a benign and most friendly aspect ; as the same bright luminary, which rises in glorious majesty upon the earth, gives life, health, and gladness to all it’s inhabitants. “ We beheld  
 “ his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and  
 “ truth.”

In a subsequent verse of this chapter, we find “ grace and truth,” set in opposition to the Mosaic law. “ The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by  
 “ Jesus

“Jesus Christ.” The law was the dispensation of justice, austere, rigorous, inflexible. “He that doeth these things, shall live in them;” and, “Cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them.” The Gospel is the dispensation of mercy, mild, gracious, forgiving, saying to the unhappy transgressor of the law, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.” The law could only make sin known; and, by consequence, aggravate it’s guilt; the Gospel can pardon sin, and abolish it’s guilt. Such is the contrast between the moral law and “grace.” The ceremonial stands opposed to “truth,” not as being *false*, but *figurative*. “The law had a shadow of good things to come; but the body,” the substance, the reality, the truth, pointed at, and delineated by such a shadowy representation, “is of Christ.” The blood of bulls and goats, for instance, was offered, but it could not take away sin; it was never intended so to do; it was “a figure for the

DISC.

VII.

---

**DISC.** "time then present," designed to direct the  
**VII.** faith of the offerer to it's correspondent  
 truth, namely, the blood of Messiah; to be afterwards shed for that purpose. In itself, the law was ineffectual, and, of course, if rested in, proved fallacious and destructive.

But the words, as they stand in the text, may be taken in a more extended sense, comprehending the whole world, which, at the time of Christ's advent, was in a state of *error and condemnation*. The two blessings, therefore, of which it stood most eminently in need, were, "grace and truth;" grace to deliver it from condemnation, and truth to correct it's errors. Both these God by Christ did vouchsafe to bestow upon it. "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved," remitting our sins, and receiving us to favour. He hath also shewn us the true and the right way, enabling as well as directing us to walk therein. Grace, without truth, can only mock us; truth, without grace, can only affright

\* *Exagorasthai* us. Ephes. i. 6.

us. But when grace hath brought us to **Disc.**  
him, truth will keep us with him: and **VII.**  
through grace we shall accomplish what  
truth requireth at our hands. "Surely his  
"salvation is nigh them that fear him,  
"that glory may dwell in our land. Mer-  
"cy and truth are met together, righteous-  
"ness and peace have kissed each other".

With wonder, gratitude, and joy, there-  
fore, let us reflect upon the honour done  
us by the **WORD** being **MADE FLESH**.  
Our nature is exalted to the throne of  
God; there is a **MAN** in heaven! The  
disciples beheld Christ's glory in the days  
of his humiliation; but eye hath not seen,  
nor ear heard, neither hath entered into  
the heart of man to conceive the glory  
with which God hath now invested "that  
"body which it hath pleased him to make  
"his own; that body wherewith he hath  
"saved the world; that body which hath  
"been and is the root of eternal life, the  
"instrument wherewith Deity worketh,

<sup>1</sup> Pf. LXXXV. 9, 10.

DISC. "the sacrifice which taketh away sin, the  
 VII. "price which hath ransomed souls from  
 ——— "death, the leader of the whole army of  
 "bodies that shall rise again. For though  
 "it had a beginning from us, yet God  
 "hath given it vital efficacy, heaven hath  
 "endowed it with celestial power, that  
 "virtue which it hath from above, in re-  
 "gard whereof, all the angels in heaven  
 "adore it".

And if "no man ever yet hated his own  
 "flesh," can God hate the flesh, which,  
 by being taken into one person with the  
 WORD, is united to the Godhead? Can  
 the Father hate Him, of whom he more  
 than once declared from heaven, "This is  
 "my beloved Son in whom I am well  
 "pleased?" "And we are members of HIS  
 "body, of HIS flesh, and of HIS bones.  
 "It is a great mystery," saith the apostle,  
 "but I speak concerning Christ and the  
 "church".

\* HOOKER, Book v. Sect. 54.

\* Ephes. v. 30.

When

When man had offended, he fled from DISC.  
his Maker, and dared no more to approach VII.  
the divine presence. But now that the  
WORD incarnate hath published his ge-  
neral invitation—"O thou that hearest the  
"prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come!"

If the Son of God became the Son of man, why should it seem a thing incredible, that the sons of men should become the sons of God; "Beloved, now are we  
"the sons of God; and it doth not yet  
"appear what we shall be; but we know,  
"that when Christ, who is our life, shall  
"appear, then shall we also appear with  
"him in glory; for we shall see him as  
"he is \*."

Delight we, then, to talk (and, since the incarnation of the WORD, why should we not delight to talk) of the dignity of human nature? Let us be careful to act up to it. To a Christian the advice of the philosopher comes with redoubled force;

\* 1 John III. 2.

DISC. "Reverence yourself." — Consider, to  
 VII. whom you are related, by whom you have  
 been begotten again to a lively hope of an  
 unfading inheritance. The stock, from  
 which you are sprung, is noble, it is royal,  
 it is divine. Disgrace it not by base and  
 unworthy actions. Your inheritance is with  
 the saints in light; have no fellowship  
 with the works of darkness. Let your edu-  
 cation be suitable to your birth, your con-  
 duct answerable to your expectations. The  
 infirmities and dishonours, to which mor-  
 tality is and must be subject, need not  
 discompose and afflict you. Be not dis-  
 mayed at the approach of pain and sick-  
 ness; let not the coffin and the shroud ter-  
 rify you. For though "all flesh be as grass,  
 "and all the goodliness of man as the  
 "flower of grass;" though "the grass wi-  
 "thereth, the flower fadeth," kindly ad-

⁂ *Utile esse civitatibus, dicit Varro, ut se viri fortes, etiam si falsum sit, Diis genitos esse credant, ut eo modo humanus animus velut divinæ stirpis fiduciam gerens, res magnas aggrediendas præsumat audacius, et agat vehementius. Augustin. de Civit. Dei. Lib. III. p. 49. See Leland, Advant. and Necess. of Rev. 1. 182.*

monishing

monishing you to prepare for an autumn **DISC.**  
and a winter, when the spring of youth **VII.**  
and the summer of manhood shall be passed —  
and gone; yet “the **WORD** of God abideth for ever.” And this is the **WORD**, which hath been “made flesh, and dwelt among us;” this is the **WORD** to which your nature is in Christ united; “this is the **WORD**, which by the Gospel is preached unto you;” whose glory there displayed, “as the glory of the only begotten of the Father,” you may now behold; and who, by his “grace” preceding, and his “truth” accompanying, will lead you to a glory, the excellence of which, enjoyment only can enable you to comprehend.



## DISCOURSE VIII.

## THE CASE OF THE JEWS.

JOHN i. 11.

*His own received him not.*

**T**HAT the eternal Son of God Disc. VIII.  
 should condescend, in human form, to visit his people, as their Saviour and Redeemer, is an event, which may well be allowed to excite our admiration. But how does our astonishment rise, when we are informed, that his people refused to receive so gracious a visitant?

The unbeliever, who is continually prying into every corner of antient and modern history, for arguments to countenance him in his unbelief, seizes, we may be sure,

DISC. sure, with avidity, on this prominent and  
 VIII. marvellous circumstance, and labours to  
 ——— make his advantage of it; affecting to conclude, that the incredulity of the Jew can only be accounted for, by supposing a deficiency in the evidence laid before him. And the believer, though satisfied that the mission of Jesus stands incontestably proved, will yet often find himself perplexed, when he reflecteth, how strange an occurrence it is, that a people, selected from all others, to be the *peculium* of the Most High; by his mighty hand and stretched out arm rescued from bondage; conducted through all kinds of difficulties and dangers; at length settled in a country destined for their habitation; and there constituted the depositaries and guardians of the divine oracles and institutions; that this people should reject and crucify the person all along foretold, as we say, by those oracles, and pointed out by those institutions.

The truth is, that in all the annals of mankind, and in the whole compass of speculation,

speculation, we meet not with a subject of *Disc.*  
so very singular and extraordinary a nature, *VIII.*  
as that now before us, namely, the case of  
the Jews. It may be added, that there is  
none, on every account, more deserving the  
deep and attentive consideration of Chris-  
tians. Let us, therefore, enquire into the  
cause of the phenomenon, with which  
they present us. Let us hear their plea,  
and examine the grounds and reasons, on  
which it is founded.

They did not, because they could not,  
deny, that the Son of Mary wrought mi-  
racles; miracles, though differing in kind,  
yet equal, in number and magnitude, to  
those performed by their own great law-  
giver. Why, then, believing Moses, did  
they not believe him? What was it, that  
could occasion their infidelity? That  
which occasions it at all times, and in all  
places, when proper evidence is offered,  
and rejected—The adoption of certain pre-  
judices and prepossessions, as first princi-  
ples, in opposition to which no evidence  
is

**Disc.** is to be admitted. Four points were by  
**VIII.** them taken for granted, from which flow-  
 — ed all their reasonings, and all their pro-  
 ceedings.

The points were these :

*First*, That, as the chosen seed of  
 Abraham, they had an exclusive in-  
 defeasible right to the favours of  
 heaven.

*Secondly*, That the law of Moses, on  
 account of it's own intrinsic effi-  
 cacy, and without a view to any  
 thing farther, was ordained for per-  
 petual observance.

*Thirdly*, That the possession of their  
 city, temple, and country, in peace,  
 wealth, and prosperity, was the end  
 of the promises.

*Fourthly*, That the prophecies war-  
 ranted them in the expectation of a  
 Messiah, who, as a temporal prince,  
 should secure them in such posses-  
 sion, by subduing their civil ene-  
 mies,

mies, and reigning over them, in **Disc.**  
**Judea.** **VIII.**

---

If these things were so, they had much, indeed, to say for themselves. But let us see, whether there be not, in their own Scriptures, evidence sufficient to set these positions aside, and to condemn those men, who, upon the strength of them, rejected and crucified Jesus of Nazareth.

Their *first* position was, that, as the chosen seed of Abraham, they had an exclusive and indefeasible right to the favours of heaven.

For thus, in reading the gospel history, we find them continually priding themselves in their descent from Abraham; as if, in order to their acceptance with God, nothing were required, but a proof of their relation to that patriarch; and as if, while that relation subsisted, no misconduct of their own could occasion them, as a nation, to forfeit such acceptance. When our Lord spake to them concerning that liberty wherewith he came to make them free, they,

**DISC.** they, mistaking spiritual for civil liberty,

**VIII.** confidently and roundly replied, "We are

" Abraham's seed, and were never in bon-  
" dage to any man<sup>a</sup>;" unaccountably for-

getting, as it should seem, what they had  
formerly suffered in Egypt and Babylon,  
and the state in which they lived, at that  
very time, under the Roman power. The

mention of heaven's mercy being extended  
to the Gentiles, always put them beside

themselves. Christ only hinted the case of

Elijah healing Naaman the *Syrian*, and

that of Elisha being sent to a widow of

*Sarepta*<sup>b</sup>, leaving the application to them-

selves. They understood him, and endea-

voured instantly to destroy him. St. Paul,

relating the story of his conversion, was

patiently heard, till he touched upon the

circumstance of his mission to the Gentiles.

" They gave him audience to this word,

" and then lifted up their voices, and said,

" Away with such a fellow from the earth,

" for it is not fit that he should live<sup>c</sup>!"

<sup>a</sup> John viii. 33.

<sup>b</sup> Luke iv. 27.

<sup>c</sup> Acts xxii. 22.

Now

Now this notion was taken up, in direct DISC.  
opposition to their own Scriptures. VIII.

---

For they neglected to observe, what it was very obvious for any one to observe, who read the Scriptures, that Abraham himself was not chosen and blessed, merely as Abraham the son of Terah; but as a servant of God, tried in various ways, and, in all, found faithful and obedient. They should, therefore, have reflected, that his descendants, of course, stood on the same foot, and would not be accounted the children of Abraham, when they ceased to do the works of Abraham<sup>d</sup>.

The same lesson might have been learned from that part of the sacred history, which records the rejection of Ishmael the eldest son of Abraham; and afterward, of Esau the first born of Isaac. These transactions evinced, that no dependence could be placed on the incident of being the seed of Abraham; since, of that seed, for cer-

<sup>d</sup> See John VIII. 39.

**DISC.** tain reasons, some have been rejected, while  
**VIII.** others were accepted. So it had been formerly ; and therefore, in parallel circumstances, so it might be again.

Remarkable, to this purpose, was the case of their ancestors, who came out of Egypt. A promise was made, that they should enter into Canaan. But the promise was afterwards revoked, because it was conditional. They fell in the wilderness, and others succeeded to the inheritance. And why did they not enter into rest ? For the same reason which keeps the Jews out, at this hour ; because of their unbelief, and hardness of heart.

The light of God's countenance was frequently withdrawn from the Israelites, when they sinned, and again restored, upon their repentance. Other qualifications were therefore requisite, without which, it little availed them to be of the house and lineage of Abraham.

It

It should have been recollected by the Disc. Jews, that the grand and capital promise VIII. made to Abraham was not limited to his natural posterity, but, on the contrary, in the most express terms that language could afford, extended to all others. It was the promise of the Seed, that is, the Messiah, in whom, not Israel only according to the flesh, but “ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH should be blessed.” And for this reason, the promise was made, previous to the covenant of circumcision, under which the Jews claimed. In the state of uncircumcision “Abraham believed God, and “it was counted unto him for righteousness;” plainly becoming thereby the father of them who should afterward believe like him, though not circumcised; that is to say, the father of the Gentiles, or “nations of the earth,” one day to “be blessed,” in the promised Seed, or Messiah.

\* Gen. xii. 3.

DISC. The Jews trusted in Moses. Wherefore,  
 VIII. then did they not hear Moses, and attend  
 to what he had said to them? In the plainest words he had told them, 1500 years before, what at length appeared to St. Peter, who, for some time, had the prejudices of a Jew about him; that "God  
 " did not respect persons<sup>f</sup>;" He had told them, that if they rebelled against their God, they should be "punished, as *strangers*  
 " were punished; and as the *nations*, so  
 " should they perish<sup>g</sup>." Nay, he had clearly predicted, that the days would come, when upon their rejection for their abominable iniquities, the Gentiles should be taken in their room, to "provoke them to  
 " jealousy<sup>h</sup>." Before the time of Moses, their progenitor Jacob had declared, that whenever Shiloh should come, "the na-  
 " tions would be gathered to him<sup>i</sup>." How very bold and explicit Isaiah continually is upon this topic of light, life, and salvation to be manifested, through Messiah, to

<sup>f</sup> Deut. x. 17. See Acts x. 34.

<sup>g</sup> Deut. vii. 19, 20.

<sup>h</sup> Deut. xxxii. 20, 21.

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xlix. 10.

the Gentiles, is well known. Malachi was DISC.  
the last of their prophets. He lived with- VIII.  
in 400 years of the appearance of Jesus. 

---

  
What a prophecy did he leave upon the  
subject, penned, as it were, with a sun  
beam—"I have no pleasure in you, saith  
"the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept  
"an offering at your hand: for from the  
"rising of the sun unto the going down of  
"the same, my name shall be great among  
"the *Gentiles*, and in every place incense  
"shall be offered unto my name, and a  
"pure offering: for my name shall be  
"great among the *Heathen*, saith the Lord  
"of hosts<sup>1</sup>."

Such are the documents and the warn-  
ings, contained in the Scriptures of the  
Old Testament, against the first tenet of  
the Jews, that, as the chosen seed of Abra-  
ham, they had an exclusive and indefea-  
sible right to the favours of heaven. Yet,  
with these Scriptures in their hands, in  
their heads, in their mouths, and upon

<sup>1</sup> Mal. i. 10, 11.

**DISC.** their phylacteries, boasting and glorying,  
**VIII.** upon every occasion, in an exact and accurate knowledge of them, did those men, after having crucified Jesus, persecute his apostles unto the death, from city to city, because the Gentiles were invited to share the benefits and blessings of the Gospel. —Such is the force of prejudice! Such the illusion of self-love!

Proceed we to consider their *second* position, namely, that the law of Moses, on account of its own intrinsic efficacy, and without a view to any thing farther, was ordained for perpetual observance.

It was by no means safe, before an audience of Jews, to hint, though ever so remotely, at the inefficacy of the Mosaic rites considered in themselves to procure the divine favour; or to insinuate, though ever so covertly, the termination and abolition of that system. Some of the “blasphemous words,” charged upon the protomartyr St. Stephen, and for which he was

was stoned, were these; "that Jesus of Nazareth should change the customs, or rites, which Moses delivered<sup>m</sup>." In their ears, this was the worst of blasphemies. It does not appear, that Stephen had used such an expression; it is probable, at that season, he was more guarded; and they, who deposed their testimony against him, are styled, "false witnesses." By urging some prophecy, or parallel, from the Old Testament, as he afterwards urged several in his apology, it is likely he had intimated as much; and the words themselves, with which he stands charged, contain nothing more than the truth, sufficiently attested by the law itself; which all along carried in it the most plenary and abundant evidence of its own present inefficacy, and future dissolution; as they, who prided themselves in the study and interpretation of it, ought to have known.

For, upon the first view of the law—

<sup>m</sup> Acts vi. 13, 14.

DISC. Let us, for a moment, suppose, with the  
VIII. Jew, that the legal ceremonies, in themselves, without having respect to any thing above and beyond them, were indeed effective of the purposes, for which they were said to be designed.—To what strange conclusions shall we be led? We must conclude, that the death of a beast could render the Deity propitious to the offerer; that a goat could carry the transgressions of a congregation into the wilderness; that the blood of bulls could atone for sin; that water with the ashes of a red heifer infused in it, could purge away the pollutions of the mind; and the like. But against such conclusions common sense exclaims aloud, and forces us to draw another, and the only just and proper inference, namely, that such rites derived their virtue not from themselves, but from persons and actions represented by them; that they were a figure for the time being; a shadow exhibiting to the faith of the pious and intelligent votary the shape and lineaments of a substance, which did not appear.

pear. This must ever be the case of external ceremonies in religion; and we ourselves should be in a situation similar to that of the Jew, if blindly and ignorantly adhering to the letter of our own sacraments, exclusive of the things they signify, and the dispositions they require, we should suppose a power inherent in the baptismal water, to wash away guilt, and in the eucharistic elements, to confer pardon and peace. DISC. VIII.

Again. Be pleased to observe the opposite character given, at different times, of the same rites. One while it is said, that they were highly acceptable to God; that he was delighted with the favour of the sacrifices, and well pleased, as it is natural to suppose he should be, with the observance of his own institutions. At other times, we hear him declaring, with indignation, that his soul was weary with offerings, and hated the appointed feasts; that he could not away with the new moons and sabbaths; that incense was an abomination

DISC. nation to him; and, in a word, that he  
 VIII. would not eat the flesh of bulls, or drink

---

the blood of goats. Now, if we take the law and it's rites to have been the things really and ultimately designed, as in themselves excellent and efficacious, they would have been always pleasing to God, like duties intrinsically good and virtuous, of which we never hear the Almighty speaking, as he doth of these sacrifices and oblations. But if the legal rites were figurative; if they were symbolical of internal dispositions and actions; then would they necessarily become pleasing and displeasing to God, in different respects: pleasing, when accompanied by such internal dispositions and actions; when disjoined from them, and rested in as meritorious, to the last degree displeasing, hateful, and abominable. They are said to have been both the one and the other; and therefore, were most indubitably figurative. To any considering person the thing speaks itself.

But the Scriptures of the Old Testament

ment did not leave a truth of such impor- **DISC.**  
tance to be inferred. They have expressly **VIII.**  
declared it.

To instance in that rite, which was the discriminating and characteristic mark of the seed of Abraham, circumcision. Moses himself hath affirmed, that a spiritual or mental circumcision was intended; and that the end of that commandment was the love of God, out of a pure heart, and faith unfeigned. "Circumcise (says he) the foreskin of your hearts, and be no more stiff-necked." And again, "The Lord thy God shall circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." When a Jew, reading this, still continues to think, that the legal rites were instituted for their own sake, and that their value lies in the *opus operatum*, is the veil on Moses' face, or on his heart? For hath

<sup>a</sup> Deut. x. 16.

<sup>o</sup> Deut. xxx. 6.

DISC. not Moses told *him*, in terms as plain as  
 VIII. those in which St. Paul hath told *us*, that

---

“He is not a Jew, who is one outwardly,  
 “nor is that circumcision, which is out-  
 “ward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, who  
 “is one inwardly; and circumcision is that  
 “of the heart, in the spirit, and not in  
 “the letter; whose praise is not of men,  
 “but of God<sup>1</sup>.”

Thus, with regard to the many ablutions enjoined and practised under the law  
 —“Wash ye, make ye clean,” saith God to his people, by the prophet Isaiah. So far, the terms are legal, and may be deemed ambiguous: but by what immediately follows, their meaning is explained and fixed; “Put away the evil of your doings  
 “from before mine eyes, cease to do evil,  
 “learn to do well<sup>2</sup>.” As if he had said, what avails the outward and visible sign, without the thing signified by it? When we read in the LI<sup>st</sup> Psalm, “Purge me

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 11. ult.

<sup>2</sup> Isai. 1. 16, 17.

“ with

“with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash  
“me, and I shall be whiter than snow;”

Disc.  
VIII.

we may think we hear the voice of a Jew.

But let us hear him again—“Wash me  
“thoroughly from mine iniquity, and  
“cleanse me from my sin. Hide thy face  
“from my sins, and blot out all mine ini-  
“quities. Create in me a clean heart, O  
“God; and renew a right spirit within  
“me. Cast me not away from thy pre-  
“sence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from  
“me. Restore unto me the joy of thy  
“salvation, and uphold me with thy free  
“Spirit.” What can a Christian—What  
can the devoutest and best informed Chris-  
tian, in the like unhappy circumstances, say  
more, than thus to pray, that God would  
by his mercy pardon the guilt, and efface  
the stain of sin, and renew the heart and  
soul again to righteousness, by the grace  
and power of his Holy Spirit? And who-  
ever peruses with attention the writings of  
the prophets, will find, that it is always

\* Pl. LI. 7.

\* Ver. 2, 9, et seq.

DISC. one part of their employment, to recall  
 VIII. the Israelites from the dead letter to the  
 — living spirit of their law; to press upon  
 them the necessity of suing for the divine  
 favour by that true repentance, and that  
 stedfast faith in God's promises, in the ex-  
 ercise of which it was the design of their  
 ritual to train them. The office of a Chris-  
 tian minister, *mutatis mutandis*, is, in this  
 particular, the same; and it may be exe-  
 cuted, with the utmost propriety, in the  
 very same language. The noble and affect-  
 ing exhortation in our Communion office  
 affords a striking proof of this; where the  
 prophetic and the evangelical expressions  
 are finely interwoven, and, like the colours  
 in a good picture, most harmoniously melt  
 into each other.

To speak a word more, touching the  
*perpetuity* of the law of Moses. The Jew  
 argues for it, from the immutability of  
 God. But it is no more a reflection upon  
 the divine immutability, that the law, hav-  
 ing answered it's end, should be abolished,  
 than

than it is, that the world should be de- DISC.  
stroyed, after the accomplishment of the VIII.  
design, for which it was created. He,  
who gave the law, foretold, in the clearest  
terms, by his prophets, that, at a certain  
period, it should cease; that he would make  
a new covenant by the Messias, and that  
the old covenant should be disannulled<sup>t</sup>;  
that the old things should pass away, and  
be forgotten<sup>u</sup>; that the ark of the cove-  
nant should come no more to mind<sup>v</sup>; that  
the legal sacrifices should cease, and sacri-  
fices of a purer kind be established in their  
room<sup>x</sup>; that the Aaronical order of priest-  
hood should be dissolved, and the order of  
Melchisedek be introduced by the Messiah;  
and that this latter priesthood should be an  
ordinance for ever<sup>y</sup>.

From these considerations it appears,  
that the law, in it's nature, was figurative  
and transitory, being a dispensation inter-

<sup>t</sup> Jer. xxxi. 31.

<sup>u</sup> Isai. xliiii. 18, 19.

<sup>v</sup> Jer. liii. 16.

<sup>x</sup> Mal. i. 10.

<sup>y</sup> Ps. cx. 4. See PASCHAL's Thoughts, p. 187.

posed

DISC. posed between the promise and it's accom-  
VIII. plishment. Previous to the law, the Gos-  
pel was preached to Abraham, that in his  
seed, the Messiah, all nations should be  
blessed. The same Gospel, at the begin-  
ning, had been preached to Adam, that the  
seed of the woman, or the Messiah, should  
bruise the head, that is, destroy the power,  
of the old serpent, who is called the devil  
and Satan, who deceived our first parents,  
and deceiveth the whole world. But as  
there was to be a long interval between the  
promise and it's performance, in the mean  
time, till the seed should come, to whom  
the promise was made, the law took men  
under it's tuition, prescribed to them their  
duty, shewed them their guilt and their  
pollution, and pointed out the means of  
pardon and sanctification. When the pro-  
mise was fulfilled, and the seed came, it  
had executed it's office, and ceased of  
course, giving place to him, whom it had  
hitherto prefigured and predicted. It spoke  
by the mouth of the aged and dying Si-  
meon, when, upon embracing the child  
Jesus

Jesus in the temple, he exclaimed, " Lord, DISC.  
" now lettest thou thy servant depart in VIII.  
" peace, according to thy word ; for mine  
" eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou  
" hast prepared before the face of all peo-  
" ple ; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and  
" to be the glory of thy people Israel."

The *third* point, taken for granted by the Jews in our Saviour's time, was, that the possession of their city, temple, and country, in peace, wealth and prosperity, was the end of the promises.

But their own Scriptures militate, with equal force, against this notion likewise.

For here we must recollect again, that *the* promise, emphatically so styled, was made, in Abraham, to " all the nations of " the earth," who could not possibly have any concern in the blessing of Canaan.

We must observe that if Canaan were indeed the end of the promise, the fathers of the Jewish people, Abraham, Isaac,

**DISC.** and Jacob, never were nor could hope to  
**VIII.** be partakers of it. They sojourned in the  
 land of Promise, as in a strange land. God  
 gave them none inheritance in it, not so  
 much as to set their foot on. They confessed  
 themselves to be strangers and pilgrims,  
 travelling towards a country, in  
 which they might fix their abode. Such  
 they lived and such they died. The country,  
 therefore, which they sought, was one  
 beyond the grave.

When the children of Abraham were  
 settled in Canaan, true Israelites understood,  
 that the rest they there enjoyed was  
 by no means the real, permanent, final rest,  
 promised and intended. In the xcvi<sup>th</sup>  
 Psalm, David, though king of Israel, and  
 seated on the hill of Sion, still speaks of  
 another future rest, warning the people of  
 his time, that they fell not short of it, as  
 their ancestors, who came out of Egypt,  
 fell short of Canaan, through unbelief and  
 disobedience. If Joshua had given them  
 the true final rest, David so long afterward  
 could

could not have spoken of another day of Disc.  
trial, and another rest reserved in store for VIII.  
the faithful. For this reason it is, that the  
same David, in that sublime and devout  
act of praise and thanksgiving uttered just  
before his death recognizing the mercies  
of God to Israel in the land of Promise,  
yet makes the very confession which the  
antient patriarchs had made, when they  
had none inheritance in that land. "We  
"are strangers before thee, our God, and  
"sojourners, as were all our fathers: our  
"days on the earth are as a shadow, and  
"there is none abiding".

If, therefore, the land of Canaan were  
not the true and final seat of rest, peace,  
and felicity for the people of God, we must  
conclude concerning that, as we did above  
concerning the law, that it terminated not  
in itself, nor was given for its own sake,  
but was also, in its kind, a figure, for the  
time then present, of a glorious and per-  
manent possession in a better world, where

<sup>2</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 15.

DISC. all those, who live and die in the Lord,  
 .VIII. shall indeed rest from their labours. The  
 — Jews had sufficient grounds, from their  
 own Scriptures, to consider it as such.  
 They should have considered it as such;  
 and they should have carried on their  
 thoughts to the rest and the inheritance of  
 the saints in light, whither their fathers  
 were gone before them through faith in  
 the promised seed, the Messiah, whose of-  
 fice it was, like another Joshua, by van-  
 quishing the adverse powers, to open the  
 kingdom of heaven, that true land of Pro-  
 mise, to all believers.

The *fourth* position maintained by the  
 Jews was, that the prophecies warranted  
 them in the expectation of a Messiah, who,  
 as a temporal prince, should secure them  
 in their possessions, by subduing their civil  
 enemies, and reigning over them in Judea.

The same prejudice which operated with  
 regard to the family of Abraham, the law  
 of Moses, and the land of Promise, ope-  
 rated

rated likewise with regard to the Mes- DISC.  
siah. This was but a natural and necessary VIII.  
consequence. For if they had fixed their  
thoughts on their national privileges, their  
ceremonies, and the inheritance of Canaan,  
the Messiah by them desired must needs  
be one, who would defend and preserve  
them in the enjoyment of those privileges,  
those ceremonies, and that inheritance.  
Accordingly, the notion current among the  
Jews, when our Lord was upon earth, and  
which, we find, stuck fast to his disciples  
even after his resurrection, was, that Mes-  
siah, when he came, should "restore again  
"the kingdom to Israel". And the grand  
argument insisted on in the Talmud, and  
by the Rabbins, is, that he did not sub-  
due the nations by the force and terror of  
his arms. He overcame not the Gentiles,  
say they, with martial power; he loaded  
us not with their spoils; he neither en-  
larged our dominion, nor increased our  
power<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Acts i. 6.

<sup>b</sup> See PASCHAL, P. 170.

**DISC.** Now the Scriptures do undoubtedly describe Messiah, as one, who should deliver his people from their enemies, and reign over them in glorious majesty. The Jews construed those passages of a temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke, and a temporal reign in Palestine. But did they construe them aright? Do not the same Scriptures unfold the design of his coming, and the process of the redemption by him, in the fullest and most particular manner? Surely they do. How many passages are there, always allowed by the antient, and not now denied, by the modern Jews, to belong to Messiah, which describe him as poor, lowly, despised, afflicted, oppressed, dying, dead? Would you now compose a man's character, without accounting for the contrarieties in it? Can you be said to have composed that of the Messiah, while you leave out one half of it? Are you not bound to find a person, in whom all the seemingly contradictory particulars are reconciled? They are easily, they are completely reconciled in the person of Jesus,

as set forth, by us Christians, in his two-  
fold nature, as God and man. They never  
were, they never will, they never can be  
reconciled in any other : and the Jews, by  
their modern fiction of two different Mes-  
siah's, to answer the purpose, have at once  
justified us, and given sentence against  
themselves.

DISC.

VIII.

But that the force of the prophetical  
testimony in favour of the Messiahship of  
Jesus may appear at one view, permit me,  
in a concise and summary way, to recall  
the several particulars of it to your remem-  
brance, as I find them collected by a very  
learned and eminent writer.

The prophets speak of a new and second  
covenant, which God would make with  
his people : they mention, not once, or  
twice, but very often, the conversion of  
the Gentiles from superstition and idolatry,  
to the worship of the true God : they  
speak of four successive empires, the last of  
which was the Roman empire ; and under  
this last empire, they say, that a new and

**DISC.** everlasting kingdom should be established,  
**VIII.**  

---

by one to whom God should give absolute power and dominion. A great person was to come, who should be Immanuel, or God with us, the Son of God and the Son of man, the seed of Abraham and of David; born of a virgin, poor and obscure, and yet one whom David calls his Lord; the Lord to whom the temple belonged, the mighty God, a great king, an everlasting priest, though not of the tribe of Levi; born at Bethlehem; a prophet like unto Moses, but greater than Moses; a prophet, who should preach to the poor and meek, and proclaim liberty to the captives, and comfort the mourners, and heal the broken hearted; who should proclaim his Gospel, first and principally, in the land of Zebulon and Naphtali, in Galilee of the Gentiles; who should have a forerunner in the spirit of Elias, crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; who should instruct in a mild and peaceable manner, without wrath and contention, before the destruction of the temple, in which

temple he should be seen and heard ; who Disc.  
should enter into Jerusalem meek and hum- VIII.  
ble, and riding on an ass ; who should work  
miracles more than Moses and all the prophets, and miracles of the merciful and  
beneficent kind, open the eyes of the blind,  
and the ears of the deaf, and make the  
dumb to praise God, and the lame to leap  
as an hart ; who, notwithstanding all his  
power and goodness, should be rejected by  
the greater part of the nation, to whom he  
should be a stumbling block ; who should  
be despised and afflicted, a man of sorrow,  
and cut off from the land of the living ;  
who should have enemies numerous, powerful, crafty, and wicked ; who should be  
accused by false witnesses, betrayed by an  
intimate and particular friend, sold for thirty  
pieces of silver, and the money given for a  
potter's field, when it had been flung away  
by the traitor, who should not live long  
after his crime, and whose office should be  
filled up by another : that the enemies of  
this blessed person should use him contumeliously, buffet him, and spit upon him,  
while

DISC. while he should be led like a lamb to the  
VIII. slaughter, not opening his mouth, but to  
intercede for the transgressors; that his  
enemies should strip him of his raiment,  
divide it among themselves, and cast lots  
upon it, surround him, pierce his hands  
and his feet, mock him, and shake their  
heads at him, give him gall to eat, and  
vinegar to drink; that he should be re-  
duced to so weak and languishing a condi-  
tion, that his bones might all be counted,  
his heart should melt within him, and his  
tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth;  
that he should be brought to the dust of  
death; that he should be pierced, and yet  
not one of his bones be broken; that he  
should be laid in the sepulchre of a rich  
and honourable man, none of his enemies  
hindering it; that he should rise again,  
before he had seen corruption, and subdue  
his enemies, and ascend into heaven, and sit  
at God's right hand, and be crowned with  
honour and glory, and see his seed, and  
prosper, and justify many, and be adored by  
kings and princes; that then Jerusalem  
should

should be made desolate, and the Jews dispersed in all lands, and the Gentiles should be converted, and flow into the church<sup>c</sup>. DISC. VIII.

---

In the application of a single prophecy, especially if it be a figurative one, interest and ingenuity may raise many doubts and difficulties; but against the accumulated weight of evidence, καὶ ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν, afforded by so many plain literal predictions, all pointing to one person, all punctually and exactly fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and in him alone, no tolerably plausible objection can ever be made. Let candour and integrity, reason and common sense be judges in the cause, and they must determine—they have already determined by the virtuous Nathanael—"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel."

Such, then, is the case of the Jews, such the evidence they rejected, and such the cause of their rejecting it. Having fixed their eyes and their hopes upon the shadow,

<sup>c</sup> Dr. JORTIN's Remarks on Eccles. Hist. Vol. 1. p. 112.

they

**DISC.** they set at nought the substance, though appearing at the time and in the manner described by their own prophets. Having rejected their God, they have been rejected by him; and the fatal errors, which occasioned their infidelity, have received a final and tremendous refutation, by the divine judgments inflicted upon them.

To demonstrate, that, as the seed of Abraham, they had no exclusive and indefeasible right to the favours of heaven, those favours have been withdrawn from them, and conferred on the Gentiles.

To shew, that the law of Moses was not in itself efficacious, or designed to be perpetual, they are put under an absolute incapacity of observing it any more. They have no altar, no priest, no temple.

To reprove the fond notion, that Canaan was the end of the promises, they have been driven out of it, and forbidden to approach it. In a state of utter desolation, it has

has passed successively into the hands of **DISC.**  
their enemies of every denomination, and **VIII.**  
never reverted to them.

---

To eradicate the ideas of a temporal Messiah, and dominion over the nations, after beholding the sceptre departed from Judah, after having been deceived by a multitude of impostors, they continue to this hour, at the end of 1700 years, fugitives and vagabonds upon the earth.

And now, let us be permitted, in our turn, to address an argument to the deist, upon this topic. You demand ocular proof of prophecy accomplished. It is before you, in an instance without a parallel. It was repeatedly foretold, both in the Old and New Testament, that, for the rejection and murder of their Messiah, the Jews should be dispersed into all countries; yet that they should not be swallowed up and lost among their conquerors, but should still subsist, to latest times, a distinct people. By Jeremiah, God declared he would  
make

DISC. make an end of the nations their oppressors,  
 VIII. but he would not make an end of them<sup>d</sup>.

---

You will not say, this prediction was written since the event; and certainly, an occurrence more singular, or improbable, could not have been predicted. In the course of human affairs, who hath heard such a thing; who hath seen such a thing? Yet, so it is. The mighty monarchies of Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome, are vanished, like the shadows of the evening, or the phantoms of the night. Their places know them no more. Nothing remains of them, but their names: while this little contemptible people, as you are wont to style the Jews, strangely secure, without a friend or protector, amidst the wreck of empires; oppressed, persecuted, harrassed always, by edicts and executioners, by murders and massacres, hath outlived the very ruins of them all. Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. Behold then a sign and a wonder, the accomplishment of prophecy in a standing

<sup>d</sup> Jer. xxx. 11.

miracle;

miracle; the *bush of Moses* surrounded by **DISC.**  
flames, ever burning, and never consumed! **VIII.**  
Contemplate the sight, as it deserves; and  
be not faithless, but believing; for this is  
the Lord's doing, and therefore so marvel-  
lous in our eyes.

That the Gospel, when slighted by the  
Jews, might not be without it's fruit, and  
that God might have a church and people  
to supply their place, the Apostles turned  
to the Gentiles; so that *their* fall became  
the riches of the world, and good was  
brought out of evil. Let the warning,  
given us by our own Apostle, be ever  
sounding in our ears, though when we con-  
sider the state of religion among us, it may  
perhaps make them tingle. "Because of  
"unbelief they were broken off, and thou  
"standest by faith. Be not high minded,  
"but fear; for if God spared not the na-  
"tural branches, take heed lest he also  
"spare not thee."

\* Rom. xi. 20, 21.

DISC. The cause of Jewish infidelity was an  
VIII. hatred of the power of godliness, concealed  
— under the cloke of zeal for it's form, and  
occasioned by a love of wealth, power, and  
parade, a notion of privilege, pre-eminence,  
and indefectibility. And is it not astonishing,  
that, with such an example before her eyes,  
the church of Rome should be pursuing the  
same course, and splitting upon the same rock?  
Let us be thankful, that we are come out of her;  
and let us guard against the shadow of her  
crime, by constantly bearing in mind, that the  
promises are spiritual, and that they are conditional;  
that if the light of the Gospel, which is  
vouchsafed us, be abused, God can remove  
it; that, like the bright ruler of the day,  
it may proceed westward, and leave us in  
darkness; that he who converted Britons  
and Saxons, can call the tribes of America  
to the faith, and “ of those stones raise up  
“ children unto Abraham.”

To conclude— When we see the Jews,  
for so great a length of time, preserved under  
der

der calamities, which would have been long since the ruin of any other people, our regard and attention ought to be strongly excited towards them. Extraordinary was their beginning, and their progress: more extraordinary, perhaps, will be their end: for if they abide not still in unbelief, they, as the natural branches, *may* surely be grafted in again: and there can be little doubt, but that such an event *will* take place. It is said, they are dispersed, “till the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled<sup>f</sup>,” and that “blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in<sup>g</sup>.” It seems evidently to be implied, that at the period mentioned, whenever it shall come, their dispersion will cease, and their blindness be removed. Glorious things are spoken of them by their own prophets, which do not seem, as yet, to have received their full and proper accomplishment. When the Gentiles had revolted from the true religion, revealed after the fall, the church subsisted,

Disc.  
VIII.

<sup>f</sup> Luke xxi. 24.

<sup>g</sup> Rom. xi. 25.

DISC. for two thousand years, in the family of  
 VIII. Abraham. Since the apostacy of the Jews,  
 — it hath subsisted nearly the same space  
 of time among the Gentiles. And what  
 faith St. Paul? “As ye in times past have  
 “not believed God, yet have now obtain-  
 “ed mercy through their unbelief; even  
 “so have these also now not believed, that  
 “through your mercy they also may obtain  
 “mercy<sup>h</sup>.” The very mercy shewn to the  
 Gentiles is to be a means of bringing the  
 Jews to the faith: and perhaps, we can no  
 where meet with an instance of a more po-  
 pular and affectionate turn, than that, by  
 which St. Paul seems to find a reason for  
 his zeal to convert the Gentiles, in his  
 love to his own countrymen the Jews, that  
 he may thereby provoke them to emula-  
 tion. Let us second his endeavours to ef-  
 fect this, by our love and our good works:  
 let us, in our lives and conversations, shew  
 them a religion, whose attractive excellence  
 may invite and compel them to embrace  
 it. Nor let us omit to observe, that, as

<sup>h</sup> Rom. xi. 30, 31.

Gentiles, while we labour to promote their **Disc.**  
interest, we likewise shall, by so doing, **VIII.**  
promote our own. So signal an event, as  
the conversion of the Jews, cannot but  
operate again on the lukewarm and dege-  
nerate nations, as well as on those that are  
still unconverted, to the production of a  
more plentiful and joyful harvest, than has  
yet perhaps been seen. “For if the fall  
“of them were the riches of the world,  
“and the diminishing of them the riches  
“of the Gentiles; how much more their  
“fulness? If the casting away of them  
“were the reconciling of the world, what  
“shall the receiving of them be, but life  
“from the dead?” The resurrection of  
Christianity, in all the splendor of truth,  
and the beauty of holiness! — Nor let us  
be staggered by the contrary appearances of  
things in the world. These cannot be more  
contrary, at the conversion of the Jews,  
than they were, at the conversion of the  
Gentiles. From the Jewish church, when  
in it's lowest and most unpromising state,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xi. 12, 15.

**DISC.** went forth those, who brought the nations  
**VIII.** to the faith; from the Gentile church,  
when in a condition equally low and unpromising, may go forth those, who shall cause Israel to return to it—Blessed times! Delightful prospect!—We see it, but not now; we behold it, but, perhaps, not near. We live, and probably, like the antient patriarchs, we may die, not having received the promises. But a generation to be born shall receive them, and shall praise the Lord, who thus, at different periods, “hath  
“shut up all in unbelief, that he may”  
finally “have mercy upon all.”—Happy in the mean season, shall we be, if, while we are preparing ourselves, we may, in any the least degree, by our prayers and our endeavours, contribute towards the preparation of our elder brethren, the once beloved and highly favoured seed of Abraham, for the approach of that awful and important day, when their and our Messiah, who, as at this time, came in humility, to abase the proud, shall return in glory, to exalt the humble.

## DISCOURSE IX.

## THE BELOVED DISCIPLE.

JOHN xxi. 7.

*That Disciple whom Jesus loved.*

**N**O writings are better calculated to **Disc.**  
 improve mankind, than those which **IX.**  
 relate the history of the lives of such per-  
 sons, as have been famous, in their genera-  
 tions, for wisdom and virtue. We are apt  
 to be terrified by the strictness and severity  
 of holiness, while it meets us only in pre-  
 cept; but when we behold it realized in  
 the example of one, made of the same flesh  
 and blood, living in the same world, and  
 exposed to the same temptations with our-  
 selves, we are fired, at the sight, with a  
 noble emulation, and are ashamed of any

DISC. longer fancying ourselves not able to do  
 IX. what so many others have done before us.

---

St. Augustine, in his Confessions, describing the conflicts he endured with temptation in his younger years, tells us, how greatly he was strengthened, and animated to the fight, by imagining he saw virtue standing, in a visible form, before his eyes, and pointing to the noble company of those who had been conspicuous examples of purity; with which consideration she gently reproached him in these words — “Why canst not thou do what *these* have done?” From the fair light of one good example, innumerable others may catch the heavenly flame, until the whole church become illuminated and adorned with bright and shining patterns of every thing that is lovely and praise worthy.

Biography hath also another advantage, namely, that it is sure to *entertain*, because it gratifies that natural curiosity men have to be acquainted with the history of others; which curiosity is then directed to its proper

per end, when it incites us to make the Disc.  
wisdom and experience of past ages our IX.  
own, in order to become proficient in the  
mystery of godliness, and to practise every  
art of virtuous living.

But what chiefly recommends this kind  
of writing to Christians is, the use made  
of it in the holy Scriptures, which are,  
for the most part, *historical*, the wisdom of  
God having thought it better to set before  
us the duties of our calling, as they pre-  
sent themselves in the life of Christ and  
those of his saints, than to give us any re-  
gular and exact system of them. The  
church, by the appointment of her festi-  
vals, hath contrived to turn our thoughts  
from time to time upon these lives, that  
so, neglect and forgetfulness may not de-  
prive us of the many benefits resulting  
from a due contemplation of them.

The saint of this day is John the Apost-  
le and Evangelist. And where will heral-  
dry, among all her boasted titles of honour,

DISC. find one that can stand in competition with  
IX. that which was conferred upon him;—

---

“The disciple whom Jesus loved!” Beloved of Him, who was himself the beloved of his Father! Could we suppose a prince to reign universal monarch over all the kingdoms of the world, the sole fountain of every kind of earthly honour to every individual man under the whole heavens, how gladly, at the hour of death, would he resign all, to be the beloved disciple of such a Master? And if nothing be esteemed too high a price for the favour of an earthly sovereign, a man, whose breath is in his nostrils, what shall we not give to obtain the love of him who abideth for ever, and will make us partakers of his own immortality? We are all the disciples of Christ, and candidates for his favour. Let us, therefore, take a view of the life and character of the person who enjoyed so large a share of it, as to be styled eminently — “that disciple whom Jesus loved;” since, to be like him, is the way to be loved of our Master as he was.

St. John

St. John was the son of Zebedee and Salome; the same Salome whose pious care had provided spices to embalm the body of our Lord, when Mary Magdalen and she, coming early to the sepulchre, found him risen from the dead. The place of his birth was one of the sea towns in Galilee, probably either Bethsaida or Capernaum, where, with his father Zebedee, and his elder brother James, afterwards distinguished from another of that name by the title of *St James the Great*; he followed the fishing trade. Youth is no obstacle in the way of obtaining the favour of Christ. The disciple whom he loved was the youngest of all the Apostles. And certain it is, that religion never appears to greater advantage, than in the persons of those who “remember their Creator in the days of their youth,” and are admitted early into the number of the disciples of the holy Jesus. It is then like a diamond set in gold. There is something more noble in renouncing the world for the love of Christ, when the relish for sensible enjoyments

Disc.

IX.

DISC. ments is at the highest, than there can be  
 IX. in doing it when the evil days come, in  
 which there is no farther pleasure or satisfaction to be had in earthly things. He surely is not so likely to accomplish his journey, who begins it when the sun is going down, as he is, who sets out, at the hour of it's rising. Youth, like the morning, is the proper season for every task that requires time and pains. Then all the powers of body and soul are fresh and vigorous, as those of one awaked from a sound and kindly sleep. Then is the golden opportunity, the sweet hour of prime, and the day is before us. "The night cometh, " when no man can work. I have written " unto you, young men (saith John himself,) because ye are strong, and the word " of God abideth in you, and ye have " overcome the wicked one\*." Rejoice then, O young man, in thy youth, not because thou art able to riot in excess and wantonness as the heathen who know not God, but because thou hast it in thy power

\* 1 John ii. 14.

to become, like the youthful John, the be- Disc.  
loved of thy Master, who seeketh such to IX.  
worship him.

---

Nor let him of low degree neglect to take comfort in the consideration, that the beloved disciple of Christ was a common *fisherman*. The distinctions of high and low, rich and poor, noble and vulgar, obtain in this world, and in this world only. In the kingdom of God they cease, and are no more. There virtue only gives precedence, and the meanest mechanic takes place of the nobles and kings of the earth, if he were a better Christian than they were. The vanity and the folly of those, whose confidence is placed in titles and pedigrees, will then appear in it's proper light, when the supposed carpenter's son shall be seen on his throne of glory, and the fisherman seated at his right hand.

The account of John being called by our blessed Lord, from his employment of fishing, to that of preaching the Gospel,

is

DISC. is thus given us, Matth. IV. 21. "And  
IX. "Jesus going on from thence," that is,  
from the place where he had just before  
called Peter and Andrew, "saw other two  
"brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and  
"John his brother, in a ship with Zebe-  
"dee their father, mending their nets;  
"and he called them. And they imme-  
"diately left the ship, and their father,  
"and followed him." Their minds had  
been prepared for the advent of the Mes-  
siah by the sermons of the Baptist, who  
indeed had pointed him out to Andrew,  
and another disciple, not improbably John  
himself, for the Lamb of God. Upon his  
appearance and call, therefore, they readily  
received and obeyed him, laying the foun-  
dation of the Christian building in the re-  
nunciation of the world. And here it al-  
ways must be laid by every one who is de-  
sirous of being "the disciple whom Jesus  
"loveth." All are not called to forsake  
their occupations and to commence preach-  
ers, as the Apostles were, Christ having ap-  
pointed in his church a regular way of en-  
tering

tering into the ministry; and at this door, **Disc.**  
when duly prepared for it by a suitable **ix.**  
education, all are now to enter, who find  
themselves inclined and disposed by the  
good Spirit of God to undertake that  
blessed work. But every one is called to  
be ready, in heart and mind, to quit all  
that comes in competition with duty, and  
to follow the Saviour in the path of holy  
living. It is necessary for us all to leave  
those companies, and engagements, and  
ways of living which ensnare our souls,  
and entangle our affections in the toils of  
sin. And when duty to God requires it,  
we must forsake our friends and relations,  
rather than reject the salvation of Christ.  
Whoever is in error, or in sin, will, by the  
good providence of God, be often called  
to come out of it in the course of his life.  
He shall, perhaps, hear a sermon, that shews  
him to himself, and awakens him; or some  
kind and charitable friend shall admonish  
him; or the holy spirit shall cause his own  
conscience to be his reprover. Then, O  
sinner, it is, that Jesus calleth *thee*. Obey  
him

DISC. him instantly; leave all that, whatever it  
 IX. be, whereby thou offendest, though near  
 — and dear to thee; join thyself to him, as  
 thy Master, and director, in all things;  
 and thou, as well as St. John, shalt be be-  
 loved of him.

When our Lord gave his Apostles their  
 commission to preach the Gospel, he sur-  
 named our Evangelist and his brother  
 James, *Boanerges*, that is, in our language,  
*Sons of thunder*. Thereby he intimated the  
 powerful effects of their preaching that  
 word, which is frequently compared to  
 thunder; being, like that, the voice of  
 God speaking from heaven, mighty in it's  
 operation. If the one shake the earth,  
 throw down lofty trees and towers, and by  
 the lightning which accompanieth it, dis-  
 solve the hardest substances, the other shak-  
 eth the empire of sin, casteth down every  
 thing which exalteth itself against heaven,  
 blasting and consuming the corruption of  
 the heart. Such are the effects of the word,  
 when preached with power: and happy  
 are

are they who experience them, in reading **Disc.**  
and hearing the Gospels, and more espe- **ix.**  
cially that of St. John, who, on the wings  
of contemplation and faith, soaring aloft,  
like his own eagle, bears the thunder of  
the word, and causes it's glorious voice to  
be heard under the whole heaven.

In the course of the evangelical history,  
we find St. John, in conjunction with St.  
Peter and St. James, admitted to the know-  
ledge and view of some more private mira-  
cles and transactions, when the other Apost-  
les had not that honour. These were the  
three who attended their Master, when he  
raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead.  
“He suffered no man to go in, save Peter,  
“and James, and John.” And this is, in  
some sense, the happy lot of every disciple  
whom Jesus loveth. For although he no  
more “know Christ after the flesh,” or  
see him working his miracles in person, as  
St. John did, yet, by faith, the wonders  
of divine love and mercy are manifest unto  
him; and he beholds accomplished in him-  
self

Disc. self and others that great work, which the  
 IX. miracles of Christ were designed to represent, the work of conversion and salvation. This work Jesus only can effect, and none but his beloved disciples know and understand it. This secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he sheweth to them the glory of his power in raising a soul from sin to righteousness, no less than he shewed it to the Apostles in raising the maid from death to life.

The same three disciples accompanied their Lord, exclusive of all the rest, at the two most remarkable scenes of his exaltation and humiliation; that is to say, when he was transfigured upon mount Tabor, and when he was in an agony, in the garden of Gethsemane. With regard to the former we read, that "he took Peter, and James, and John, up into a high mountain, apart, and was transfigured before them." There they beheld his mortal body suddenly clothed upon with light, as with a garment; they beheld his glory, as the

the glory of the only begotten ; they saw **Disc.**  
the Sun of Righteousness shining in his **IX.**  
strength ; they saw Moses and Elias glorified with him, as the Law and the Prophets always appear, when seen in company with Jesus ; and they heard the voice from heaven declaring him to be the beloved of the Father. Again, at his passion, “ he taketh  
“ with him Peter, and the two sons of  
“ Zebedee, James and John, and began to  
“ be sore amazed, and very heavy.” Then they beheld him encompassed with the infirmities of a man, and beset by the powers of darkness ; they beheld him humbled under the load of our sins ; they saw the Sun overcast with a cloud ; and heard the same divine person praying in a bitter agony, as one smitten of God in his anger, and afflicted unto death. And happy is every disciple, whom Jesus so loveth, as to admit him, by faith, to behold and dwell upon the contemplation of his blessed Master, in these his two states of exaltation and humiliation ; the glory of his divine, and the sufferings of his human nature.

DISC. These are subjects, on which a man can  
IX. never meditate, but with infinite profit and  
— advantage. By ascending the holy mount, and there viewing, in the transfiguration of Jesus, the glory of his person, and an ensample of that glory which he shall bestow on his saints, at the resurrection, he is armed against the pain and shame of the cross, and strengthened to undergo his portion of sufferings in the world. By attending his Redeemer in the garden, during his agony, he learns the intolerable punishments due to sin, and the amazing love of him who would descend from Tabor to Gethsemane, to bear them for sinners; he is prepared to take up his cross, and to be conformed to Christ in sufferings, from thence looking back to the glory which the Son of God left for a time, that he might bestow it on his beloved disciples for ever. Whosoever hath so digested in his heart these two subjects, as to be able to reduce the considerations on them to practice, hath attended his Master, with St. John, on the mount, and in the garden.

Three

Three times we hear in the Gospels the Disc. beloved Disciple reprov'd by his Master, IX. to shew us that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and purgeth, till, like the branch of a well dressed vine, he bring forth more and better fruit. Once, a spark of ambition, lighting upon the spirits of the two brothers, James and John, had suddenly inflamed them with a vehement desire of pre-eminence above their colleagues in the ministry: they wanted to "sit, one on his "right hand, and the other on his left, "in his kingdom." Our Lord gave them to understand, that they, who were called to be his disciples and Apostles, were called to do his work, to labour and to suffer for the service of the church, and the salvation of souls, and should esteem it sufficient to be exalted, like their blessed Master, in heaven, after the work was done. Thus the two young candidates for promotion stood reprov'd. Made wiser by the instructions of their Lord, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them at the day of Pentecost, they thought no more of pre-

DISC. ceding their brethren, except in diligence

IX. and patience : they renounced self, preached the Gospel, suffered persecution, were crowned indeed, but it was with thorns : and thus, at length, in a far better sense, they obtained their wish, of sitting upon thrones with Christ, in his kingdom.

At another time the two disciples James and John, not bearing to see their Lord rejected by the schismatical Samaritans, were for calling fire from heaven to consume them, after the example of the prophet Elijah. But Christ rebuked them, telling them, “ they knew not what manner of Spirit they were of, for the son of man was come to save the lives of men, not to destroy them.” The present is the day of grace and mercy, long suffering and forbearance, with Christ, and it ought to be so with his disciples. The hour is coming, when, like Elijah, who represented him in his judicial capacity, he shall execute the vengeance written, and burn up his enemies on every side. But the time is not yet.

The

The third reproof St. John met with **Disc.**  
from his Master was likewise for an in- **IX.**  
stance of indiscreet zeal, in forbidding a  
person to cast out devils in Christ's name,  
because he followed not them. "Forbid  
" him not (says Christ) for there is no  
" man which shall do a miracle in my  
" name, that can lightly speak evil of me.  
" For he that is not against us, is on our  
" part. For whoever shall give you a cup  
" of water to drink in my name, because  
" ye belong to Christ, he shall not lose his  
" reward". No emulation or jealousy  
should prevent our encouraging every man  
to do good, though not in all points as we  
are, or could wish him to be. Whatever  
real good he does, it is God who does it  
in him, and in time that God may reveal  
all other things to him; towards which,  
we ourselves, by treating him with tender-  
ness and kindness, may be made instru-  
mental.

But these offences, upon Christ's admoni-

<sup>b</sup> Mark ix. 38.

DISC. tions, having been repented of and forsaken,

IX. they deprived not our Apostle of the place

---

he had obtained in his Lord's favour. For at the last supper we find him sitting next to Jesus, and, as the manner then was, reclining on his breast: as it is the privilege of the beloved disciple, when admitted to the supper of the Lamb, to pour all his prayers and complaints into the bosom of his Redeemer, who is always ready to hear, always mighty to save.

At the apprehension of Jesus, John fled with the rest, but, quickly returning again, entered into the High Priest's palace, and attended his blessed Master through every stage of his passion, till we behold him taking his station at the foot of the cross, where he is usually drawn in pictures of the crucifixion, with a countenance full of grief and love unutterable. From the cross Jesus commended his holy mother to the care of St. John, who from thenceforth, happy in an opportunity of shewing his love to his Lord, as well as of entertain-  
ing

ing such a guest, “took her to his own Disc.  
“home,” where she continued till her IX.  
death, treated by him with the duty and  
affection of a son. Let the disciple, then,  
who would shew himself worthy the love  
of Christ, often contemplate and sympathize  
with his suffering Lord, placing himself,  
in imagination, at the foot of the cross,  
and looking, with the eye of faith, on him  
who was crucified thereon; let him abide  
by the persecuted truth and the afflicted  
servants of Jesus, in the hour of darkness  
and sorrow; and let him, for Christ’s sake,  
and in obedience to his repeated injunc-  
tions, honour and shew kindness to the  
church, so long as he lives, and be a duti-  
ful son to her.

Upon the first tidings of the resurrection,  
St. John, running with St. Peter, outran  
him, and came first to the sepulchre, as  
the soul, that has the love of Christ abid-  
ing in her, will always be foremost in  
quest of him.—It was St. John who dis-  
covered Jesus to St. Peter, when he ap-

Disc. peared in the habit of a stranger, at the sea  
 ix. of Tiberias. "That disciple whom Jesus

---

"loved, saith to Peter, it is the Lord."

He who loves Christ, will always know him when he comes in the disguise of a *stranger*, or a *poor man*: he will know, that *it is the Lord* who asks relief of him in their persons; and he will inform others of the same great truth.—It was concerning St. John that a report went among the disciples as if he was never to die, grounded by mistake on our Lord's answer to St. Peter's question—"Lord, what shall this  
 "man do? If I will that he tarry till I  
 "come, what is that to thee?" But, alas, St. John loved Christ too well, to think an exemption from death, for the sake of living in such a world as this, a thing to be desired. And whoever loves his Master as he did, will be of the same opinion.

After the effusion of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost, we read of St. John, in the character of an Apostle, using his gifts for the good of mankind, healing the sick,  
 preaching

preaching the Gospel, thrown into prison, DISC.  
and brought forth before the Jewish coun- IX.  
cil but still undaunted in bearing his tes-  
timony ; herein leaving an example to his  
successors, the ministers of Christ, through  
all generations.

From the ecclesiastical histories we learn, that after preaching the Gospel, and founding many churches in Asia, he was sent bound from thence to Rome, at the command of the tyrant Domitian, who had him cast into a caldron of boiling oil. But the God, who preserved the three children in the midst of the fiery furnace, brought the apostle out of the caldron unhurt, to convince us, that nothing can harm "the disciple whom Jesus loveth." The emperor, however, not at all moved by this miraculous deliverance, banished the holy man to a wretched and comfortless island, called Patmos, where he saw heaven opened and beheld those glorious visions recorded in the book of Revelation : as God often vouchsafes a larger portion of spiri-  
tual

DISC. tual joys and comforts to his servants, when  
IX. the are secluded from those of the world.

---

Upon the death of the emperor Domitian, many of his cruel edicts were revoked by his successor; when St. John, taking advantage of the indulgence, returned to Ephesus: and finding Timothy the bishop of that church martyred, he took upon himself the government of it, till in a good old age of about an hundred years, he most willingly resigned his meek and gentle spirit into the hands of his Lord and Saviour, to experience the fulness of his love, and possess the glories he had so often contemplated.

These are the great outlines of St. John's life and character. But, after all, whoever would be thoroughly acquainted with him, in order to become like him, must survey and copy that fair picture which he hath drawn of himself in his divine writings, where we sometimes behold the lofty flights of the eagle, and at others hear the plaintive

plaintive voice of the turtle; we behold **Disc.**  
him viewing and describing the glories of **IX.**  
Christ in his Godhead and kingdom; we  
hear him relating the sweetly-sorrowful  
and loving discourses of his dear Master,  
in his state of humiliation. Let these holy  
books, therefore, be in our hands, until  
they shall have wrought their proper work  
in our hearts; that is to say, until by be-  
lieving the doctrines and practising the du-  
ties taught therein, we shall have learned  
to live the life of faith and charity. So  
shall we be **CHRISTIANS**, in word, and  
in deed; so shall we be true followers of  
the saint of this day; so shall we be "the  
" **DISCIPLES** whom Jesus will **LOVE**."

in the voice of the turtle, we behold  
 him viewing and adoring the glories of  
 Christ in his Godhead and kingdom, we  
 have him relating the sweetest and most  
 and leaving discourse of his dear Mother  
 in his fatal passion. Let the Holy  
 Ghost, therefore, be in our hearts, and  
 that shall have wrought their proper work  
 in our hearts, that we may be able to be-  
 lieve the doctrine and practice the duty  
 we ought therein, we shall have learned  
 to live the life of Jesus and his Mother. So  
 shall we be Christians, true, and  
 in a word, shall we be true followers of  
 the Son of the Virgin, to shall we be  
 disciples whom Jesus will receive.

## DISCOURSE X.

## RACHEL COMFORTED.

JER. XXXI. 15, 16, 17.

*Thus saith the LORD, a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping: Rachel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the LORD, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border.*

**O**F the events which befel the church DISC.  
of Israel in old time, many were x.  
by Providence ordained and disposed to be  
—  
figurative

DISC. figurative of other events, in the latter  
x. days, relative to the church Christian, or  
— Universal. Let it be supposed, for example, in the present instance; that the Babylonish captivity, and subsequent restoration, to which these words of Jeremiah relate, did, like the Egyptian bondage, and the redemption therefrom, represent that more wretched, durable, and general captivity, in which mankind were detained by their grand enemy, with the restoration from it, which the Son of God, as at this season, was born to effect. And let us try, upon this plan, to shew the beauty and propriety of the application which St. Matthew has made of the passage to the slaughter of the Bethlehemitish infants, and the lamentations of those who were thus bereaved of their children, by the sword of Herod.

It is not easy, perhaps, to find a more judicious illustration of the case in hand, than the following one, given by the excellently learned Dr. JACKSON, to whose most useful labours, on a curious and difficult

ficult subject, I must here once for all, Disc.  
acknowledge myself indebted for the sub- x.  
stance of what I am now about to lay be-  
fore you.

“We know,” says this able Divine,  
“that a map, though in itself a thousand  
“times less than the least parcel of in-  
“closed ground, may represent the exact  
“form or proportion of the country whose  
“name it bears, though that be ten thou-  
“sand times bigger than the largest field  
“that our eyes can look upon. And thus  
“hath the wisdom of God, under the  
“same words and phrases, included two  
“deliverances, of which the one is a map  
“to the other. He therefore who shall  
“deny passages to be literally meant of the  
“deliverance of Judah and Benjamin from  
“Babylon, because they are only fulfilled  
“in our deliverance by Christ, will give  
“the Jew no small advantage; he will  
“commit as great an oversight, as if an  
“heir, possessed of a goodly estate, should  
“burn the map, or terrar of it, which  
“his

DISC. "his ancestors had truly taken for the be-  
 x. "nefit of their successors, if they should  
 — "know how to use it, when any contro-  
 "versy should arise concerning the bounds  
 "or extent of their inheritance. The Jew,  
 "on the contrary, in denying these places  
 "to be meant of Christ and us, because  
 "they have been literally verified of the  
 "deliverance of his fathers by Zorobabel  
 "and Joshua the priest, is like a man dis-  
 "tracted, who boasts he hath a goodly he-  
 "ritage, because he can shew the map, or  
 "engrossed terrar of those lands, of which  
 "the law has deprived him, since he knew  
 "not how to use them aright."

In the prosecution of this design, per-  
 mit me, in the

First place, To collect and present  
 to you the historical circumstances  
 concerning the person introduced  
 by Jeremiah, as making lamenta-  
 tion over her children, and the oc-  
 casion of her so doing, with the pro-  
 phet's

phet's consolatory address to her, *Disc.*  
upon that occasion : after which we *x.*  
shall be prepared, in the

---

Second place, To take a view of those parallel circumstances, which offer themselves in the lamentation made by the Bethlehemitish mothers, and the cause thereof, with the consideration which was to administer comfort to *them*, in the day of their great and bitter affliction.

The mournful scene is laid by Jeremiah in Ramah, a city belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, of which tribe, it may be observed, the prophet himself was a member, as we learn from the first verse in his book; "The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin." The person introduced by him, as making lamentation, is Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, and the mother of that tribe. She had before borne Joseph, at which

VOL. I. T time

DISC. time by divine instinct with allusion to  
 x. the name just imposed, she said — “The  
 ——— “LORD shall *add* to me another son.” In  
 childbirth, however, through the prevalence of her pains, she was induced to give up her former hopes of a second son, for lost. Her attendant endeavoured to comfort her with her own prediction; “Fear  
 “not, for thou shalt have this son also.” Yet, “when her soul was in departing  
 “(for she died!)” — never surely was there a more affecting parenthesis — “when her  
 “soul was in departing (for she died!) she  
 “called his name *Benoni*,” that is, *the son of my sorrow*. “His father,” seeking to avert the omen with speed, “called him  
 “*Benjamin*,” or, *the son of the right hand*, that is of power and glory.

*Heu nunquam vana parentum auguria* — the observation of an heathen poet, is found more particularly verified in the history of the patriarchs, because among them there was often a foresight more than human, and the prospect into futurity was  
 opened

opened to them by a light from above. DISC.  
 The different fates of the tribe of Benjamin seem to have answered the different names imposed at the birth of it's founder, by father and mother. No tribe more valorous than that ; none more afflicted with disasters and calamities. At one time slaughtered by it's fellow tribes, almost to excision, a true *Benoni* to Rachel, who had she been alive, must have " wept for her " children, with an exceeding bitter weeping ;" at another, restored to populousness and prosperity, placed, as it were, at the head of the rest, furnishing the first king, who ruled God's people Israel, and realizing the name and character of *Benjamin*, the *son of the right hand*. X.

Upon the revolt of the ten tribes, Benjamin adhered to Judah, then the royal tribe, the tribe that gave birth to David, the tribe from which, in the fulness of time, a greater than David was to descend. When Jeremiah uttered the words now under our consideration, Judah was closely

T 2                      besieged

Disc. besieged in Jerusalem by the Chaldean  
 x. army, in whose way thither the land of  
 — Benjamin lay. It experienced, therefore,  
 of course, all the horrors of invasion. It  
 was miserably wasted, and its inhabitants  
 were carried away into captivity. This is  
 the reason why old Rachel still renews her  
 former complaint, and will not be persuaded,  
 but that Benjamin must still be *Benoni*.  
 She and her daughters, (for under the name  
 of Rachel we must comprehend all the wo-  
 ful mothers of that tribe) fill the heavens  
 with their outcries, whilst their children  
 are forced from their embraces into misera-  
 ble bondage in Babylon. And though  
 mention be only made of Ramah, a city of  
 Benjamin, yet must we imagine the wail-  
 ings to have been as loud and bitter about  
 Bethlehem, which, though in the tribe of  
 Judah, was upon the borders of Benjamin,  
 and near unto the place where Rachel died;  
 as we read in Genesis; “ Rachel died, and  
 “ was buried in the way to Ephrath, which  
 “ is *Bethlehem*, and Jacob set a pillar upon  
 “ her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel’s  
 “ grave

“grave unto this day.” Such was “the Dis-  
 “voice heard” in the days of Jeremiah, x.  
 the “lamentation, and the bitter weep-  
 “ing;” when “Rachel,” as the general  
 mother, and representative of all the mo-  
 thers in the tribe, “weeping for her chil-  
 “dren, refused to be comforted, because  
 “they were not.” As a people, they had  
 no civil existence. They were, in that  
 sense, lost; they were dead; they were  
 gone into captivity.

It was under these circumstances, that  
 the prophet addressed the disconsolate mo-  
 ther—considering him as a *Benjamite*, we  
 may say, *his* disconsolate mother—“Thus  
 “saith the LORD, Refrain thy voice from  
 “weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for  
 “thy work shall be rewarded, saith the  
 “LORD, and they shall come again from  
 “the land of the enemy; and there is  
 “hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that  
 “thy children shall come again to their  
 “own border.”—As if he had said in  
 other words—

\* Gen. xxxv. 20.

DISC. — Remember, O Rachel, my mother,  
x. the days that are past, and call to mind  
— God's wonders of old time. Remember  
how thou sorrowedst, when thou brought-  
est forth my father Benjamin, as fearing  
lest he should have died with thee, or be-  
fore thee. Yet after thy pains, hadst thou  
this joy, that a man was born into the  
world. And though thou didst impose  
upon him a name betokening sorrow, yet  
his father wisely changed it into one pre-  
dictive of better things. Remember, when  
Benjamin, for the good of his brethren,  
was called to go down into Egypt, how  
Jacob supposed him lost, and complained  
that he was bereaved of his children. But  
notwithstanding these ill bodings, Benja-  
min, at length, returned in safety, with  
his brother Judah; the father was again  
blessed with the sight of his youngest and  
best beloved son, the light of his eyes,  
and the staff of his old age. Such, at this  
time, my mother, is thy fear and sorrow;  
but greater, hereafter, shall be thy com-  
fort, and thy joy. Benjamin is indeed led  
captive

captive into Babylon; but *Judah* is once more gone with him, as his pledge, and if he bring him not back again, let the blame be his, yea mine, yea God's for ever.

DISC.

x.

“For thus saith the LORD, if my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them—yea I have sworn by my holiness that I will not fail David.” Now, my mother, while this promise lasts, in general, to Israel, as Abraham's seed, Benjamin must have his portion in the blessing. And while it remains good in particular to the seed of David, Benjamin, for his faithful adherence to Judah, in prosperity and adversity, must participate with him in the prerogative. And when the kingdom shall be restored, as restored it will be, whoever shall sit on the left hand, faithful Benjamin

DISC. must sit on the right hand of the throne of  
 x. David.——

---

This, taking all circumstances into the account, seems to have been the import of Jeremiah's consolatory address to Rachel, in the day of her calamity. And his words, or rather those of the Almighty, were, in their fullest import, made good to her. Within seventy years, it came to pass, that the posterity of Benjamin returned, with Judah, into the land of Promise, and inhabited Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and other bordering cities, promiscuously with the royal tribe. "Her work was rewarded;" her patient expectation, in faith and hope of the promises made her, failed not of its fruit, in the appointed season: her "children came again from the land of the enemy to their own border," as the LORD had foretold by his prophet; they "returned, and came to Sion with songs; joy was upon their heads," and in their hearts; "and sorrow and fighting flew away!"

We

We are now prepared to take a view Disc.  
was proposed in the x.

Second place, of those parallel circumstances which offer themselves, in the lamentation of the Bethlehemitish mothers, and the cause thereof, with the consideration which was to administer comfort to *them* in the day of their great and most bitter affliction.

The death of the tribe of Benjamin, in conjunction with the tribe of Judah, in the time of Jeremiah was a civil death, a departure into captivity. Their restoration from it was, consequently, a civil restoration, a restoration to their antient city and polity in their own land. The death of the Bethlehemitish infants was a bodily death, by the sword of Herod; their restoration must therefore, be a restoration to the bodily life, thus violently taken from them, that is, it must be a resurrection. Rachel's present lamentation for the bodily death of her children must have a  
comfort

DISC. comfort answerable to it, as her former lamentation for their civil death had a comfort answerable to *that*. Let us see what analogy and proportion the sorrow and joy in one case bear to the sorrow and joy in the other.

There is no need to shock your feelings, by endeavouring to draw a picture at large of this day's most abominable massacre. Suffice it to say, that the bloody murder of children, in their tenderest and most helpless estate, torn from the arms and butchered in such multitudes, before the eyes of their mothers, must again cause "a voice to be heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning;" great, beyond the conception of any, but those who then expressed, or were witnesses to it. We cannot read the words which describe it, without imagining that we hear Rachel, called from her tomb near Bethlehem, "weeping for her children;" that we see her turning away, and "refusing to be comforted for her children, because they

“ they were not ;” because they were de- Disc.  
parted hence, and were no more to be x.  
found in the land of the living ; they were  
led away into that other captivity, more  
wretched and durable than the captivity of  
Benjamin, with Judah, in Babylon ; they  
were deprived of light and life ? they were  
hurried from the warm and chearful pre-  
cincts of day, to be imprisoned in the cold  
and dark dominions of the king of terrors.  
And who can bring them from thence ?  
Not the High Priest Joshua, the son of  
Josedek ; not Zorobabel, who conducted  
their fathers from captivity ; not Samson,  
though, in the prime of his strength,  
he carried away the gates of Gaza ; not  
David, nor their father Benjamin, though  
both had been alive to command, or lead  
the whole posterity of Israel. All these  
might have said of the sons of Rachel this  
day commemorated by us, as David did of  
his child—“ We shall go to them, but they  
“ shall not return to us.” But the holiest  
of the antient priests and prophets, the  
mightiest among the antient kings and  
rulers,

**DISC.** rulers, were still subject to death, and had  
**x.** taken their last repose with the beggar in  
the dust. Where then is the wonted promise of Rachel's reward? Who shall comfort her in this calamity?

Nothing, certainly, can wear a more gloomy and comfortless aspect, than things here seem to do. Yet in this as in the former instance, "Thus saith the LORD" to the mourner, and who else can say it? — "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and  
" thine eyes from tears: for thy work  
" shall be rewarded, saith the LORD, and  
" they shall come again from the land of  
" the enemy; and there is hope in thine  
" end saith the LORD, that thy children  
" shall come again to their own border."

Recollecting what hath been said above, and bearing in mind the circumstances of time and place, pointed out in the application made of the former part of the passage by St. Matthew, we may suppose this latter part to speak to the Bethlehemitish mothers

mothers, in some such manner as the following——

Disc.

x.

——At Bethlehem, the birth place of Benjamin, where the pillar was erected over Rachel's grave, a child is born, who has caused the children of Benjamin and Judah once more to become *Benoni's*, true *sons of sorrow* to their mothers; a character he himself is to sustain on earth, insomuch, that "a sword shall pierce through the "soul" of her that bare him. As the seed of the woman, and with regard to the nature derived from her, he is to be "a "man of sorrows and acquainted with "grief." But, like *Benjamin*, from his Father he shall receive a name expressive of far different things; "a name above every "name;" he shall be exalted from misery and mortality to "the *right hand* of the "majesty in the heavens;" there to take possession of an inheritance in the true land of Promise. Of this his inheritance in a state of power and glory, he will not fail to make those partakers, whose blood has  
been

**DISC.** been shed by the executioners of Herod,  
**X.** on his account. Look upon this their  
final deliverance and restoration, as it is delineated in that map, or chart of it, the deliverance of your ancestors from the Babylonish captivity, and the restoration to their own land. Call to mind what was said by them, at that time, on the ground of their own happy experience.—“ They  
“ that sow in tears, shall reap in joy ; he  
“ that goeth forth and weepeth,” as if, ignorant of the art of husbandry, he feared the corn he was sowing would perish in the earth, “ shall doubtless come again  
“ with joy, bringing his sheaves with  
“ him.” The heavens, echoing with your cries, and the earth moistened with your tears, are witnesses to men and angels, that you have more plentifully sowed in grief, than your ancestors. As the sorrows of your seed-time have abounded, so the joys of your harvest shall super-abound. The LORD’s promise of old is not yet expired, but extends, in full force, to you and yours. With what more precious seed could the  
land

land of Judah and Benjamin be sown, than DISC.  
the blood of tender infants, harmless and x.  
undefiled even in thought? Scattered upon  
the ground by cruel hands, it shall be gathered by the power of him, who dispenseth the breath of life to all things living. None of this seed shall be lost, or prove unfruitful. Every grain shall produce it's ear, and every ear it's proportion of incorruptible and pleasant fruit. Great, therefore, as your affliction is allowed to be, yet mourn not as they that have no hope, but, even in the midst of your bitter complaints, still remember, that Rachel's pains must have a joyful recompence, and her exceeding sorrows portend extraordinary comforts in the issue. Only let patience have it's perfect work through faith, and that "work shall be rewarded" with the possession of the promises. For, through the Saviour who is born, "there is hope in the end," that, like as your fathers, in God's good time, "came again from the land of the enemy to their own border," so your children, whose untimely

DISC. timely excision you lament, shall come  
X. again from the strong holds of the grave,  
 whither they had been led away captive,  
 to the lot of their inheritance in the heavenly Canaan, and the new Jerusalem, there to live and reign with him, for whom they have now suffered and died. *These* children of Judah and Benjamin, like their progenitors, “shall return, and  
 “come to Zion with songs, and everlasting  
 “joy shall be upon their heads; they, and  
 “you with them, shall obtain joy and  
 “gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall  
 “again flee away.”

The words, thus explained, will suggest to us some useful reflections, suitable to the festival, on the case of the slaughtered *infants*, and that of the lamenting *mothers*.

With regard to the *infants*, we may observe the choice, made by the church, of proper persons to attend the blessed Jesus, upon the commemoration of his birth. These are St. Stephen, St. John, and the  
 Innocents.

Innocents. He was born to suffer, and **Disc.**  
therefore, the festival of his nativity is im- **x.**  
mediately followed by the festivals of those  
who suffered for him. St. Stephen was a  
martyr, and the first martyr, both in will  
and in deed: St. John, the beloved disci-  
ple, was such in will, but not in deed, be-  
ing miraculously preserved from the death  
intended for him by Domitian. The Inno-  
cents were martyrs in deed, but not in  
will, by reason of their tender age.

Of these last, however, it pleased the  
prince of martyrs to have his train com-  
posed, when he made his entry into the  
world, as at this season; a train of in-  
fants, suited to an infant Saviour; a train  
of Innocents, meet to follow the spotless  
Lamb, who came to convince the world of  
sin, and to redeem it in righteousness. They  
were the first-fruits offered to the Son of  
God, after his incarnation, and their blood  
the first that flowed on his account. They  
appeared as so many champions in the field,  
clad in the King's coat of armour, to inter-  
cept the blows directed against him.

DISC. The Christian poet, PRUDENTIUS, in  
 x. one of his hymns, has an elegant and beautiful address to these young sufferers for their Redeemer——

*Salvete, flores Martyrum;*

*Quos, lucis ipso in limine,*

*Christi infecutor sustulit,*

*Ceu turbo nascentes rosas.*

*Vos, prima Christi victima,*

*Grege immolatorum tener,*

*Aram ante ipsam, simplices,*

*Palmâ et coronis luditis.*

“ Hail ye first flowers of the evangelical  
 “ spring, cut off by the sword of persecu-  
 “ tion, ere yet you had unfolded your  
 “ leaves to the morning, as the early rose  
 “ droops before the withering blast. Dri-  
 “ ven, like a flock of lambs, to the slaugh-  
 “ ter, you have the honour to compose the  
 “ first sacrifice offered at the altar of Christ;  
 “ before which, methinks I see your inno-  
 “ cent simplicity sporting with the palms  
 “ and the crowns held out to you from  
 “ above.”

So

So remarkable an event, necessarily attracts our attention to that age, which is proposed by our Lord, as, in many respects, a model for us all to copy, in forming our tempers and dispositions. "They brought young children to Christ, that he should touch them, and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But Jesus was much displeased, and said, Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." And again, when the disciples asked him, who should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, he took a little child, and set him in the midst, and said, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of God." To be fit for the inheritance of the saints in light, we must put off the passions which are too apt to infect us as *men*, ambition, pride, craft, envy, hatred, malice, anger, revenge, covetousness, and concupiscence of every sort, and put on their opposites, humility, meekness, modesty, charity,

DISC. charity, purity, simplicity; we must become such in heart and mind, by the discipline of religion, as little children are, by their age; possessed of the same unlimited confidence in the care of a Father, who, as we are assured, careth for us; looking up to him for all we want, and flying to him for protection from all we fear; never entertaining a suspicion of our being forsaken, or neglected by him, nor the least inclination to resist his will; equally insensible to the promises and threatenings of the world; resigned to suffer, and not afraid to die; when we are called so to do; able to smile at the drawn dagger, and ready to embrace the arm that aims it at our heart.

This idea of a child of God was daily realized, to the admiration of the whole pagan world, in the first ages of the church. The same inexhaustible and all powerful grace will realize it in these latter days, when religion shall be considered by us as an art, rather than a science; when *non*

*magna*

*magna loquimur sed vivimus*, shall be the Disc.  
device adopted by the Christian philoso- x.  
pher; and the precepts of the Gospel shall  
be practised with as much diligence as that  
with which it's evidences are studied.

And, lo, for our encouragement, in the  
portion of Scripture this day appointed for  
the Epistle, the veil is rent which separates  
the two worlds; the prospect is opened  
into another system; the "holiest of all"  
is disclosed; the celestial mount is discover-  
ed; and on it's summit "we see a Lamb  
"stand, with an hundred and forty four  
"thousand," of the like sweet and inno-  
cent disposition, "having his Father's  
"name written on their foreheads. These  
"are they which follow the Lamb, whi-  
"thersoever he goeth. These were re-  
"deemed from among men, being the  
"first-fruits unto God and the Lamb.  
"And in their mouth was found no guile,  
"for they were without fault before the  
"throne of God." From their station  
they beckon us after them, shewing us,

**Disc.** for our instruction and direction in the  
 x. way, that “of such is the kingdom of  
 ———, “heaven.”

And now, we are ready, perhaps, to say with St. Peter, on an occasion somewhat similar, It is good for us to be here! let us make our abode on the mount! But the time is not yet. We must return, and conclude, as we began, with the lamenting *mothers*, whom we left behind us, in the valley of tears.

Their cries, like those of Rachel, portending the birth of a *Benoni*, a *son of sorrow*, teach us, his disciples, to expect sorrow for our portion in this life, and to look forward to another, for comfort and joy.

In the world, as in Rama, “a voice is heard, lamentation and weeping, and “great mourning.” Earthly possessions and satisfactions, of every sort, are, by their nature, transient. They *may* leave us; we *must* leave them. To him who views them,  
 in

in their most settled state, with the eye of **Disc.**  
wisdom, they appear, as the air in the **X.**  
calmest day does to the philosopher through  
his telescope, ever undulating and fluctuat-  
ing. If we place our happiness in them,  
we build upon the wave. It rolls from  
under us, and we sink into the depths of  
grief and despondency.

Children, relations, friends, honours,  
houses, lands, revenues, and endowments,  
the goods of nature and of fortune, nay  
even of grace itself, are only *lent*. It is  
our misfortune to fancy they are *given*. We  
start, therefore, and are angry, when the  
loan is called in. We think ourselves *mas-*  
*ters*, when we are but *stewards*; and for-  
get, that to each of us will it one day be  
said, "Give an account of thy steward-  
ship, for thou must be no longer  
"steward."

Youth dreams of joys unremitted, and  
pleasures uninterrupted; and sees not in  
the charming perspective the cross acci-

DISC. dents that lie in wait, to prevent their being so. But should no such accidents for a while intervene, to disturb the pleasing vision, age will certainly awake, and find it at an end. The scythe of time will be as effectual, though not so expeditious, as the sword of the persecutor; and without a Herod, Rachel, if she live long, will be heard lamenting; she will experience sorrows, in which the world can administer no adequate comfort. She must therefore look beyond it.

The patriarchs and people of God, in old time, were often delivered from adversity. They often enjoyed prosperity. But after all the wonders wrought for them, and all the blessings conferred upon them, the issue of things was still the same. These friends and favourites of heaven still saw their relations, frequently their children, falling around them, and at length dropped, themselves, into the grave, to be mourned over by those that survived them. This was the case even in the land of Promise

mise itself. Deplorable indeed, therefore, **Disc.**  
and desperate, like the worst of the hea- **x.**  
then, would have been their condition, had  
they not been taught, through temporal  
deliverances, and temporal prosperity, in a  
temporal land of Promise, to contemplate  
another deliverance from the power of the  
destroyer, another prosperity that should  
have no end, in another land of Promise,  
which should never be taken from them,  
and from which they should never be  
taken; where they, their parents, and their  
children, should meet again, to part no  
more. What else is "the hope of Israel,"  
what else can it be, but a "resurrection  
"from the dead".

Nothing can be plainer than the words  
of the Apostle on this subject. Having  
enumerated the ancient worthies, from Abel  
to David and the succeeding prophets, he  
thus concludes; "These all, having ob-  
"tained a good report through faith, re-

<sup>b</sup> Acts xxiv. 15. xxvi. 6. xxvii. 20.

"ceived

DISC. "ceived not the promise;" THE promise,  
x. emphatically, the grand promise, in faith  
 of which they died, and of which all other  
 promises were only shadows, and known  
 by them to be such; "God having" all  
 along foreseen and "provided some better  
 thing for us;" better than any of those  
 figurative promises which they did receive;  
 to wit, an eternal redemption, and an eter-  
 nal inheritance; that, in such eternal re-  
 demption and inheritance, "they, with-  
 " out us, should not be made perfect<sup>d</sup>,"  
 as God intends that we, together with  
 them, at the general resurrection, shall be  
 made perfect in heaven.

If, then, the mothers in Judah and Benjamin had been properly instructed in the faith of the antient church, when Jeremiah addressed to them the words we have been considering, though they must understand them immediately as a promise that their children should be delivered from Babylon, and brought back again to

<sup>c</sup> Την επαγγελίαν.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. xi. 40.

their

their own land; yet their thoughts would naturally be carried on, for further comfort to that other deliverance and restoration from death, promised by all the holy prophets, since the world began; even as we may presume the thoughts of a Christian parent would now be, whose son was a slave in Barbary, should a prophet be sent to him with the following message from God; “Your son is gone into captivity, “but he shall certainly be redeemed from “it.”

Disc.  
x.

---

This, however, is indisputable; that in the application which St. Matthew has taught us to make of the passage, it can admit of no other construction; because there can be no deliverance from bodily death, but by a bodily resurrection.

Learn we, therefore, and a more important and useful lesson cannot be learned—whenever death deprives us of those who are near and dear to us, to comfort ourselves and one another with these words;  
and

**DISC.** and let each of us, as occasion for consolation shall offer itself, listen to Jeremiah's prophecy, as if it were spoken to himself; "Thus saith the LORD; Re-  
 x. "frain thy voice from weeping, and thine  
 "eyes from tears; for thy work shall be  
 "rewarded, saith the LORD, and they  
 "shall come again from the land of the  
 "enemy. And there is hope in thine end,  
 "saith the LORD, that thy children,"  
 thy relations, or thy friends, "shall come  
 "again to their own border; that from  
 the dark and desolate regions of the grave  
 they shall come to the light and glory of  
 the heavenly Jerusalem; where, as holy  
 John tells us, "there shall be no more  
 "death, neither sorrow, nor crying";  
 where Rachel shall finally cease her lamentations, lay aside her mourning veil,  
 and wipe away all tears for ever from  
 her eyes.

• Rev. xxi. 4.

## DISCOURSE XI.

## THE CIRCUMCISION.

LUKE ii. 21.

*And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel, before he was conceived in the womb.*

THESE words conclude the Gospel Disc. XI. for the day, taken from a chapter which hath afforded ample matter of wonder and delight through the course of the present joyful season, when the church, like the blessed virgin mother, is never seen, but with the holy child in her arms. By the portions already selected from it, we have been made to listen to the sermon preached by an angel upon the subject of the

DISC. the Nativity ; and the sweet notes of that  
 XI. anthem, sung by the choir of heaven immediately after, are still sounding in our ears. With the happy and obedient shepherds we have been at Bethlehem, and there have seen “this great thing which is “ come to pass, which the Lord hath made “ known unto us ;” and have found reason to return, like them, “glorifying and “praising God for all the things, that we “have heard and seen, as it was told unto “us.” Nor shall we ever forget, it is to be hoped, (at least, never, at this hallowed and gracious time) to imitate her example, who “kept all these sayings, and pondered “them in her heart.”

We are now conducted from the birth to the circumcision of our Redeemer, an account of which immediately follows the history of the shepherds, in the words of the text. And very meet, and right, and our bounden duty it is, that we should at this time, and in this place, employ our thoughts upon it, seeing it was the beginning

ning of sorrows to the Son of God, and DISC.  
the beginning of joy, because the begin- XI.  
ning of redemption, to the sons of men,  
for whom the first blood of the all-propi-  
tiating victim was now shed. A stumbling  
block it may prove to the Jew, foolishness  
it may appear to the Greek, and to all  
those, who, like the *oney*, desire a *sign* of  
earthly splendor and magnificence, or, like  
the other, seek after the *wisdom* of false  
philosophy: but to the intelligent, and  
therefore humble believer, Christ, in this  
state of weakness, pain, and sorrow, is  
“the wisdom of God” to contrive, “and  
“the power of God” to effect the delive-  
rance of his people.

It is observable, that whensoever, in the  
Scriptures, mention is made of any particu-  
lar relative to the abasement, the infirmi-  
ty, and the shame submitted to by Christ,  
it is presently contrasted by something  
concerning his exaltation, his power, and  
his glory; that so, the objection arising in  
the mind from a view of the former, may  
be

DISC. be obviated at once by the consideration of  
XI. the latter, and the Christian may never lose  
— sight of that capital article of his faith, the  
union of the two natures, divine and human, in the person of his Saviour. Thus we behold him in swaddling clothes; but instantly we hear the heavenly host singing an Hallelujah to him. He lies in a manger; but the brightest star in the firmament points the way to his abode. He expires upon the cross; but all nature suffers with him, almost to a dissolution. And thus, in the instance now before us, he is circumcised indeed on earth, as the son of Abraham; but a name is given him from heaven, as the Son of God. For in these lowly and ignominious circumstances, he receives the name enjoined before to be imposed on him by the angel; a name above every name; a name which evil spirits fear, and good ones adore; a name, at which every knee should rejoice to bow, and which every tongue should exult to confess; since it is by this name that glory is given to God in the highest, peace restored

stored to earth at war with it's Maker, and Disc,  
good will stream forth to sinful men. XI.

---

In order to unfold the mystery of the circumcision of Christ, it will be necessary to enquire into the institution of this rite, with the reason and end thereof. "Moses (saith our Lord to the Jews) gave you circumcision, not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers<sup>a</sup>;" this being one of the many legal ceremonies, which were originally communicated to the ancient patriarchs, and afterwards re-ordained in writing by Moses. The first account of it occurs in the history of our father Abraham; and St. Paul discoursing at large upon the point<sup>b</sup>, informeth us, that it was given as a "sign or seal of the righteousness, which is by faith." Now the object of Abraham's faith was redemption by the promised Seed, that is to say, by Messiah, who should spring from his loins; and in whom, by reason of that redemption, "all the nations of the earth

<sup>a</sup> John vii. 32.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. iv.

DISC. "were to be blessed" with the blessings of  
 XI. eternity. And the *righteousness*, which is  
 — by such faith, consisteth in the justification  
 of believers by the cutting off and doing  
 away the body of sin through the sacrifice  
 of Christ, by which they are pardoned and  
 made holy, being separated from sin, and  
 sin from them, in order to a final separation  
 from every thing that offendeth, at  
 the resurrection of the just. This is "the  
 " *righteousness of faith*," with which  
 Abraham having been before invested, he  
 received circumcision, not as any thing  
 which could make him righteous, but as a  
*sign and seal* of that evangelical righteousness,  
 " which he had being yet uncircum-  
 " cised; to the end that he might be the  
 " father of all them who believe, though  
 " they be not circumcised;" and that we  
 Gentiles, as well as the Jews, might be-  
 come the children, and inherit the blessing  
 of Abraham. But from the institution of  
 this rite to the manifestation of the pro-  
 mised Seed, it became to the natural de-  
 scendants of the patriarch Abraham, what  
 baptism

baptism hath been ever since to the spiri- Disc.  
tual progeny of him, who is, in a much XI.  
higher sense, *the father of us all*; it be-  
came the sacrament of initiation into the  
true church and faith. Now, in a sacra-  
ment, the outward and visible sign is in-  
tended to introduce us to the inward and  
spiritual grace figured by it as a *sign*, con-  
veyed by it as a *means*, and insured by it as  
a *pledge*. And what the inward and spiri-  
tual grace signified by circumcision was,  
not only St. Paul, but Moses himself will  
tell us, who in the book of Deuteronomy  
expresseth himself in these terms; "Cir-  
cumcise the foreskin of your heart, and  
" be no more stiff necked<sup>c</sup>." And again;  
" The Lord thy God will circumcise thine  
" heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love  
" the Lord thy God with all thine heart,  
" and with all thy soul, that thou mayest  
" live<sup>d</sup>." From these passages laid toge-  
ther, the following truths seem to be fairly  
deducible; namely, First, That circumci-  
sion was an outward and visible sign of an

<sup>c</sup> Deut. x. 16.

<sup>d</sup> Deut. xxx. 6.

Disc. inward and spiritual grace to be wrought  
 XI. in the *heart*; Secondly, That this inward  
 — and spiritual grace was the cutting off and  
 casting away of *sin*; Thirdly, That for this  
 work they were not sufficient as of them-  
 selves, but their sufficiency was of *the Lord*  
*their God*, who would work in them, and  
 with them, through faith, by the holy  
 Spirit; Fourthly, That the effect and con-  
 sequence of this spiritual circumcision  
 would be the love of God shed abroad in  
 their hearts, with it's genuine fruit of un-  
 feigned obedience to his commandments;  
 and, Lastly, That this would prepare the  
 way to eternal life; "that thou mayest  
 "LIVE," saith Moses; "that thou mayest  
 "live," not only on earth, under grace,  
 but hereafter in glory: since "purification  
 "of the heart" is in order to a better life  
 in that celestial Canaan, the ultimate end  
 of all the promises, that good land which  
 the Lord our God shall give to every Israe-  
 lite indeed, and in which he himself, after  
 having been the "shield" of Abraham and  
 his seed, shall be their "exceeding great  
 "reward."

“reward.” And so it is written, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Thus do these two texts from the writings of Moses involve in them the substance of the Gospel; they begin with the cleansing of the heart from sin, thence proceeding on to the love of God till they terminate in the beatific vision of him in an endless life. And could the Jews have read their law, without that veil, which infidelity had drawn over the eyes of their understanding; could they have beheld, with open face, the glory of the Lord, enshrined in the Mosaic mysteries; could they have discerned the “apple of gold” through the “network of silver,” instead of mistaking the casket for the jewel which it contained and preserved; they had then saved an Apostle the trouble of informing them, that “he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, nor is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in

\* Gen. xv. 1.

† Matth. v. 8.

‡ Prov. xxv. 11.

DISC. "the spirit, and not in the letter, whose  
 XI. "praise is not of men, but of God<sup>b</sup>."

---

We will venture then to suppose, that the institution of the rite now before us, with the reason and end thereof, is sufficiently cleared, and circumcision proved to be a sacramental sign of the cutting off and casting away of sin from the heart. But what mean ye then, as saith St. Bernard, by circumcising the child Jesus, who did no sin, and knew none; who was conceived in the womb of a virgin, by the Spirit of eternal purity; why must he undergo this painful ceremony? To this we answer, besides the example of humility and obedience herein afforded us by our Lord; as also the proof from hence resulting of the reality of his human nature; besides these collateral considerations, I say; the reason why Christ was, as on this day, circumcised, is the same with the reason why he was born, why he lived, and why he died. What he did, and what he suffered, he did

<sup>b</sup> Rom. 11, 28.

and suffered not for himself, but for us. DISC.  
 The whole of this momentous and salutary XI.  
 truth is expressed by the Apostle in those  
 few words; "He was made sin for us,  
 " who knew no sin, that we might be-  
 " come the righteousness of God in him<sup>1</sup>." He bore our griefs, that we might enter  
 into his joy: he put on the bloody gar-  
 ment of sin and death, that we might be  
 invested with the white and spotless robes  
 of righteousness and life. He became not  
 only one *with* us, as the head is with the  
 members; but one *for* us, or in our *stead*,  
 as a surety is for a debtor. And therefore,  
 though, as the all perfect Son of God, he  
 could need neither circumcision nor bap-  
 tism, yet, as the suffering representative of  
 fallen human nature, he submitted to both,  
 with the same view, namely, "to fulfil  
 " all righteousness." This was the argu-  
 ment he used to John, in the case of his  
 baptism, and it holdeth equally in that of  
 his circumcision. For having once under-  
 taken to appear as our surety and substitute,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 21.

DISC. it became incumbent on him "to fulfil  
 XI. "all righteousness," to perform what we  
 should have performed, and to suffer for  
 what we did not perform. As the children  
 therefore were compounded of flesh and  
 blood, he partook of the same; he was  
 "made of a woman;" as they were cir-  
 cumcised, he was circumcised also; he was  
 "made under the law<sup>k</sup>." And indeed, it  
 had profited us nothing, that he was made  
 of a woman, had he not likewise been  
 "made under the law;" for then the law  
 could never have apprehended him; the  
 law, with it's penalties, having no concern  
 with a person, who, like him, was not an  
 offender against it. For "the law was not  
 "made for the righteous, but for the law-  
 "less and disobedient<sup>l</sup>." We are the trans-  
 gressors, the debtors, whose bond was for-  
 feited, and "the hand writing of condem-  
 "nation" standing in full force against us.  
 But Christ, by submitting to the act of  
 circumcision, voluntarily put himself under  
 the law, and took the whole burthen of

<sup>k</sup> Gal. iv. 4.<sup>l</sup> 1 Tim. i. 9.

it, as he did the cross, upon his own shoulders: since it is an axiom in theology, that  
 “if any man be circumcised, he is a  
 “debtor to do the whole law”. Christ  
 therefore by being *circumcised*, became  
 that *debtor*, and entered into covenant anew,  
 as man’s surety, to pay the uttermost far-  
 thing. But the debt was not a pecuniary  
 one. The law was capital, and death the  
 penalty incurred by the breach of it. Life  
 was the debt due from us, and paid by  
 Christ to the justice of heaven. And there-  
 fore, when he took upon himself the obli-  
 gation of paying it, which was, as at this  
 time, the covenant was made in the body  
 of his flesh, and signed with his precious  
 blood; to shew that in him, now “made  
 “sin for us,” the body of sin was to be  
 cut off and destroyed; that the curse of  
 the law had seized on him as the malefac-  
 tor, (for such he vouchsafed to be account-  
 ed, and among such he did not disdain to  
 be numbered) and that his disciples, who  
 were really malefactors, might therefore

DISC.

XI.

<sup>m</sup> Gal. v. 3.

“go

DISC. "go their way" free; the blood now  
 XI. shed being an earnest, that in due time he  
 would shed the whole, and make his human nature an offering for sin. This he did upon the cross, when he paid indeed the uttermost farthing that the law itself could demand, and so fulfilled all justice; thereby "cancelling the hand writing of ordinances, taking it out of the way, and nailing it to his cross", never more to appear in judgment against us. And accordingly, to our great and endless comfort, it is declared from the apostolical chair, that "there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus".

The way therefore is now open for us to proceed to a consideration of the imposition of the name JESUS, at the time of circumcision. For then it was, that Christ laid himself under the obligation to SAVE, and began to answer to that sacred and glorious name. From the very

<sup>a</sup> John xviii. 8.

<sup>o</sup> Col. ii. 14.

<sup>p</sup> Rom. v. 1.

moment in which a sufficient surety appears, and becomes responsible for the debt, "deliver the man," saith the creditor, "I have found a ransom<sup>a</sup>." The greatness of the deliverance may be estimated by the value of the ransom; and reciprocally, the value of the ransom by the greatness of the deliverance. The ransom was the dear and only Son of God; the deliverance was a deliverance from all the terrors of angry and avenging heaven. "The law worketh wrath<sup>r</sup>;" because it condemneth the transgressors thereof, that is, without the intervention of the evangelical covenant of repentance, it condemneth every child of Adam; seeing that according to the conclusion fairly deduced by the same Apostle from undeniable premises, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God<sup>s</sup>."

But who shall express, or conceive adequate ideas of that condemnation, from

<sup>a</sup> Job xxxiii. 24.

<sup>r</sup> Rom. iv. 15.

<sup>s</sup> Rom. iii. 23.

which

DISC. which Christ hath delivered us; of that  
 XI. wrath, which the law worketh against every man, who shall have no surety to appear for him, in the day when God shall come to require an account? As far indeed as the elements of nature can display to human sense the terrible majesty of their great Creator; as far as his eternal power and Godhead can be manifested to the sons of earth by the things that are made; so far did it once please God to manifest and display them; and that, upon an occasion, which evidently pointeth out to us his intention in so doing. The occasion I mean, was the giving of the law, the circumstances of which are presumed to be the best and fullest comment upon the apostolical text before cited; "The law worketh  
 "wrath."

Let imagination therefore place us for a few minutes at the foot of Sinai, where every man must place himself, who would form an estimate of the salvation wrought for him by Jesus Christ. We shall find  
 the

the mountain carefully fenced about, and guarded by this awful prohibition; "Charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish.—For if so much as a beast touch the mountain he shall be stoned, or struck through with a dart. Take heed to yourselves therefore, stand at the nether part of the mount<sup>t</sup>." There then let us take our station, and behold a thick cloud, blackness of darkness, settling upon the mountain, and diffusing itself around; in the midst of this most horrible night, the flame of devouring fire rolling forth in dreadful waves, and burning to the midst of heaven; lightnings every moment issuing from it, and breaking through the surrounding gloom; the air incessantly thundering from every quarter; and above all, the voice of a trumpet piercing the heavens, sounding long, and waxing louder and louder; the mountain smoking like a furnace, and quaking greatly from its foundations; all the people in the camp trem-

Disc.

XI.<sup>t</sup> Exod. xix. 12, 17, 21.

bling

**DISC.** bling and dying for fear : nay “so terrible  
**XI.** “was the sight, that even Moses said, I  
 “exceedingly fear and quake.” And if  
 Moses, who, as the figure of him that  
 should come, had the honour to be a me-  
 diator between an offended God and his  
 offended people, if he exceedingly feared  
 and quaked at this terrible sight, what must  
 be the state of the careless sinner, who hav-  
 ing incurred all this heavy displeasure, nor  
 ever employed an hour in meditating his  
 escape, shall be suddenly called upon by  
 death to meet it all, unprepared? And  
 who is there among us, that thinks him-  
 self prepared to meet his God, as he ap-  
 peared upon mount Sinai? Let the expe-  
 riment be made only in an ordinary tem-  
 pest of thunder and lightning. No sooner  
 is that glorious voice of Jehovah heard in  
 the heavens, but the earth trembles and is  
 still. “Hear attentively,” saith Elihu in  
 Job, “the noise of his voice, and the  
 “found that goeth out of his mouth. He  
 “directeth it under the whole heaven, and

▪ Heb. xii. 21.

“ his lightning to the ends of the earth. DISC.

“ At this my heart trembleth, and is mo- XI.

“ ved out of his place.” What sensations then would be produced in the hearts even of the best of men by a manifestation like that at Sinai? And if the righteous scarcely sustain it, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Nor let any man think himself unconcerned in that scene, because it is past. The terrors of mount Sinai are still in force against every one who is not found in Christ Jesus; unless we suppose that the despisers of the Gospel will fare better than the contemners of the Law, and not rather be thought worthy of much sorer punishment. The hour is coming, when our eyes shall see more amazing sights, and our ears shall hear more terrifying sounds, than were seen and heard by the house of Israel in the wilderness. For yet a little while, and the same God who was revealed from heaven in flaming fire to give the

“ Job xxxvii. 1, 2, 3.

law,

**DISC.** law, shall again be revealed from heaven in  
**XI.** flaming fire to enquire how it hath been  
observed, and to take vengeance on those  
who have not secured unto themselves a  
sponsor to stand in the gap for them. So  
that although the things seen and heard at  
mount Sinai did not affect us, yet the argu-  
ment enlarged upon by the Apostle, Heb.  
xii. undoubtedly doth; namely, that if  
the law was so terrible, when enacted, how  
much more terrible must it be, when re-  
quired at our hands by God, coming in  
glorious majesty to judge the world? Then  
shall there be blackness of darkness, not  
for a time, but for ever; then shall the  
lightnings of Sinai be extended over all  
the earth, and a fire be kindled which shall  
not be quenched; then shall the heavens  
pass away with the noise of a great and in-  
tolerable thunder; a far louder trumpet  
shall then not only pierce the ears of the  
living, but also sound an alarm through all  
the regions of the grave, and awaken those  
who shall have slept for ages in the dust;  
then he whose voice formerly shook the  
earth,

earth, shall fulfil his promise, " Yet once **Disc.**  
" more I shake not the earth only, but **XI.**  
" also heaven<sup>\*</sup>;" both of which shall be  
removed, and their place no more be  
found; then shall all the tribes of the  
earth, as well as those of Israel, tremble,  
and mourn, and wail; and who, where is  
he, that thinketh he shall not then find  
cause to say with Moses, " So terrible is  
" the sight, that I exceedingly fear and  
" quake!"

Such therefore is the wrath which the  
law worketh, and such is the condemna-  
tion of that " hand writing against us,"  
from which our dear Master and Redeemer,  
as at this time, the time of his circumci-  
sion, engaged to rescue all who should be-  
lieve in him. Then it was, that he took  
upon himself the law, and the penalty  
annexed to the breach of it, being (as  
an Apostle has expressed it) " made a  
" curse for us, to redeem us from the  
" curse of the law<sup>†</sup>;" that is, to deliver

<sup>\*</sup> Heb. xii. 26.

<sup>†</sup> Gal. iii. 13.

Disc. us from the black darkness of sin and  
 xi. death; from the thunders and lightnings  
 — of the Father's vengeance; from the dread  
 of the trumpet of eternal judgment; the  
 dissolution and destruction of the world;  
 the words of condemnation, and the unextinguishable flame: and having delivered us  
 from all these terrors, to introduce us to a  
 far different scene of things; to the light  
 of righteousness and immortality; to the  
 peace and love of God; to the still small  
 voice of evangelical grace; to the harps of  
 angels, and the music of Hallelujahs; to  
 the final sentence of absolution, "Come,  
 "ye blessed;" to a kingdom that cannot  
 be moved; to the joys of heaven, and the  
 glories of eternity. "For we are not come  
 "unto the mount that might be touched,  
 "(the palpable, material mount) that  
 "burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and  
 "darkness and tempest, and the found of  
 "a trumpet, and the voice of words, which  
 "voice they that heard, intreated that the  
 "word should not be spoken to them any  
 "more (for they could not endure that  
 "which

“ which was commanded, and if so much **DISC.**  
“ as a beast touch the mountain, it shall **XI.**  
“ be stoned or thrust through with a dart :  
“ and so terrible was the sight, that even  
“ Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.)  
“ But we are come unto mount Sion, and  
“ unto the city of the living God, the  
“ heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumer-  
“ able company of angels, to the general  
“ assembly and church of the first born,  
“ which are written in heaven, and to God  
“ the judge of all, and to the spirits of  
“ just men made perfect, and to Jesus the  
“ mediator of the new covenant, and to  
“ the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh  
“ better things than that of Abel ;” the  
one crying as loud for mercy, as the other  
did for vengeance. And therefore, when  
this blood of sprinkling was first shed,  
“ when eight days were accomplished for  
“ the circumcising the child, his name  
“ was called Jesus, which was so named  
“ of the angel, before he was conceived in  
“ the womb, saying, Thou shalt call his

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xii. 18, &c.

DISC. "name JESUS, for he shall SAVE his people from their sins".

The doctrine of the day being thus stated and explicated, nothing remains, but that we reduce it to practice. Something Christ hath left us, in every mystery, to believe, and to admire; something also to love, and to imitate. The legal ceremony of circumcision, having received it's accomplishment in Jesus, became of course null and void; insomuch, that the performance of it afterwards was justly deemed a renunciation of Christ, a denial of his advent in the flesh; for so the Apostle witnesseth; "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing". This is the unhappy case of the Jews, to this day; who, having lost the evangelical faith of their fathers, still continue under the law, with all it's judgments in force against them; and this must be their case, until their heart shall turn to the Lord their God, until they shall be led

\* Matth. i. 21.      \* Gal. v. 2.

to acknowledge the holy Jesus, as the end **Disc.**  
of the law, and the Saviour of the world. **xi.**

---

In the mean time, by us who believe, the doctrine is to be transmitted from the head to the heart, there by the operation of the eternal Spirit to do away what St. James styleth "the superfluity of maliciousness," cleansing us from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that we may perfect holiness in the fear of God. It is true, that sin was mystically cut off, and destroyed, in the body of Christ; but wherefore? That it might live and flourish in us? God forbid. Christ was made sin for us, not that we might continue in sin, but that we might become the righteousness of God in him. For if we be dead to sin in Christ our representative, how can we, consistently with our profession, live any longer therein? How can the circumcision of Christ profit any one, who celebrates the festival as constantly as it returns, himself still continuing "uncircumcised in heart and ears?" Or, in other words, how can his baptism

<sup>c</sup> Περίσσειαν κακίας — Jam. i. 21.

DISC. save him, whose life is one perpetual re-  
 XI. nunciation of it? for baptism which suc-  
 ————— ceeded in the place of circumcision, takes  
 up the mystery, where that left it. The  
 one sheweth sin cut off, in and with the  
 body of Christ; the other representeth it  
 as buried in his grave, and the new man,  
 through the power of his resurrection,  
 risen again, without sin, unto salvation.  
 And one cannot but admire the manner in  
 which St. Paul hath interwoven the spiri-  
 tual application of these two sacraments of  
 the old and new law. “Ye are compleat  
 “ (saith he to his Colossians) in Christ,  
 “ who is the head of all principality and  
 “ power. In whom also ye are circum-  
 “ cised with the circumcision made with-  
 “ out hands, by the circumcision of Christ,  
 “ buried with him in baptism, wherein  
 “ also ye are risen with him, through the  
 “ faith of the operation of God, who hath  
 “ raised him from the dead: and you, be-  
 “ ing dead in your sins and the uncircum-  
 “ cision of your flesh, hath he quickened  
 “ together with him, having forgiven you  
 “ all

“all trespasses<sup>d</sup>.” We are to labour therefore after the spirit and power of these two sacraments in our hearts, that they may be manifested in our lives and conversations. Otherwise, the letter of them can only condemn us. For as he is not a Jew, so neither is he a Christian, who is one outwardly; but he is a true Jew, and he is a true Christian, who is so inwardly; from whose heart and members the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are cut off; who is dead and buried to sin, and risen again to righteousness. This blessed work sacramentally shewn forth and begun in baptism, is to be continued through life by the successive renovations of repentance, by daily accessions of knowledge, faith, and charity, producing and carrying on a gradual growth in grace, until it be perfected. And as the season annually returns, when it pleaseth God to begin again his work which men so often behold, of renewing the face of the earth, by commanding the sun to revisit and cheer our world, where nature, during his absence,

<sup>d</sup> Col. 11. 10.

DISC. hath drooped and languished away, but is  
XI. again to be raised from the death and  
deformity of winter, to the life and beauty  
of spring, until, by a silent, progressive operation, the year be crowned with the loving kindness of the Lord; are we not hereby directed to look up by faith to the great luminary of the intellectual world, who declareth from his glorious throne, “ Behold I make all things new \*;” beseeching him to arise upon us with healing in his wings; to visit us with the light of his countenance, and the joy of his salvation, that so old things may pass away, and we may be renewed in the spirit of our minds; to disperse the clouds and darkness of ignorance; to lay the wintry storms and tempests of disordered passions, and introduce into our hearts the calm and glad some spring of everlasting righteousness and peace; to pour upon the year all the blessings of that glorious festival, with which it commenceth; and, in one word, by making it HOLY, to make it HAPPY.

\* Rev. xxi. 5.

## DISCOURSE XII.

## THE EPIPHANY.

MATTH. II. 1, 2.

*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*

**I**N this remarkable part of sacred story DISC.  
 there are two particulars, on which, at XII.  
 the present season, we are called upon to  
 employ our meditations. And as they will  
 suggest ample matter for that purpose, I  
 shall crave your leave to enter upon a dis-  
 cussion of them without any farther pre-  
 face.

The

## DISC.

XII.  

---

The particulars are these :

First, The *persons* here mentioned by St. Matthew.

Secondly, Their *journey*.

First, then, let us contemplate the *persons* here mentioned by St. Matthew, their *country* and *condition*.

With regard to their *country*, the text gives us no farther information, than that they came from *the east*. Of the antient expositors, some mention Chaldaea, others Persia ; but others, among whom are Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Epiphanius, with more probability perhaps, assign Arabia Felix, a country less distant from Judea, and lying to the south-east of it; the same country pointed out by the Psalmist, when, predicting the accession of the Gentiles, he saith, “ The kings of Sheba and “ Seba shall offer gifts :” the country from whence, attended by a train of camels bearing

bearing spices, came the queen of Sheba DISC.  
to the court of the temporary and represen- XII.  
tative PRINCE OF PEACE; the country  
particularly specified in the LX<sup>th</sup> chapter  
of Isaiah; "All they from Sheba" shall  
"come; they shall bring gold and incense,  
"and they shall shew forth the praises of  
"the Lord:" a country remarkable, by  
the testimony of historians, for plenty of  
gold, and of the most precious aromatics:  
a country, in the neighbourhood of which  
Balaam uttered and left behind him his  
famous prophecy, concerning the "Star  
"that should arise out of Jacob."

As to the *condition* of these eastern tra-  
vellers, it is said by the Evangelist, they  
were *Magi*; a term then applied, among  
all the nations of the east, in it's primary  
and good sense, to those who gave them-  
selves up to the pursuit of wisdom and  
knowledge, by all the means in their power.  
They were the great mathematicians, phi-

<sup>a</sup> Sabea—extrema Arabiæ Felicis regio, Persico sinui  
proxima. VITRINGA in loc.

losophers,

DISC. losophers, and divines of the ages in which  
 XII. they lived, and had no other knowlege but  
 that which by their own study, and the  
 instructions of the antients of their sect,  
 they had attained unto. But as their credit  
 in the world, on these accounts, was  
 so great, that a learned man and a Magian  
 became equivalent terms, the vulgar looking  
 on their knowlege to be more than natural,  
 entertained an opinion of them, as if they  
 had been actuated and inspired by supernatural  
 powers, in the same manner as has too  
 frequently happened, at other times, and in  
 other places. In the number of these Magi,  
 or learned men, of old, persons not only of  
 noble but of royal extraction often thought  
 proper to enlist themselves. Many, therefore,  
 have imagined these Magi to have been such;  
 and the supposition, all circumstances considered,  
 is not improbable.

But the particular, of which we are certain,  
 in which we are chiefly interested, and which  
 at this time, claims our attention

tion, is that they were *Gentiles*, aliens, by DISC.  
nature, like ourselves, from the common- XII.  
wealth of Israel, and strangers to the co-  
venant of promise.

In the family of Noah, the true religion was universal or catholic. It continued to be so, till the days of Abraham, when the general apostacy of the nations to idolatry made it necessary that a family should be called forth, and separated from the pollution that was in the world, to be the happy instrument of preserving faith upon earth, "till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made." By this step in the divine dispensations, it was never intended to "put the candle under a bushel, but to place it on a candlestick," and there to keep it burning, that it might give light to those that were in the house, and to those who should enter into it. Many, from time to time, did enter into it; and therefore many more might have entered in, had it so pleased them. The transactions of God with his chosen people were

DISC. were not carried on in a corner; and there  
 XII. was no period, in which he left himself  
 without witness among the nations round  
 about them. Let us take a cursory view of  
 the divine proceedings, in this light only.

Of Abraham's call the inhabitants of  
 the country from which he was called,  
 and, in consequence of that call, departed  
 for ever, could not have been ignorant;  
 and as many as were disposed to obey the  
 admonition of heaven, might, doubtless,  
 have had permission to attend him.

The patriarchal families, in their so-  
 journings, travelled through many of the  
 countries inhabited in those early ages. By  
 the governors of those countries we find  
 them treated with reverence, and acknow-  
 ledged to be prophets, nay, "mighty princes  
 " of God." The story of their divine call  
 and destination must have been the subject  
 of conversation, wherever they came, nor  
 would they be backward to make it so.  
 They would, of course, communicate to  
 others

others what heaven had communicated to **DISC.**  
them. They would exhort men, as they **XII.**  
went, to save themselves from that unto-  
ward generation. That such conversations  
and such exhortations were not without  
fruit, we may conclude from the mention  
that is made of "the souls which they  
" had gotten in Haran," or the persons they  
had converted, and adopted into the holy  
family. The behaviour of Abimelech and  
his subjects is very observable, and shews  
there was, even among *them*, a sense and  
fear of God, which it is to be apprehend-  
ed, we might now look for in vain in  
countries calling themselves *Christian*.

The deliverance of Abraham's brother  
Lot, and the unparalleled overthrow of the  
cities of the plain by fire from heaven,  
must have been a very awakening and af-  
fecting call to all within hearing.

In process of time, we find Egypt, then  
the most powerful and learned of nations,  
opening it's hospitable arms to receive the  
family

DISC. family of Jacob, having owed it's preservation, in the days of dearth to one of that family, ordained, in a wonderful manner, to save much people alive. Here the church was settled, increased, and flourished for more than three hundred years, bearing testimony to the true religion, in the eye of the world.

Let any one consider with himself the astonishing series of miracles wrought by Moses on a stage so public as this; the passage through the Red Sea; the destruction of Pharaoh and his host; the march of the Israelitish army, with the divine Shechinah, or Glory, in the midst of it; the awful and tremendous appearance on mount Sinai, at the promulgation of the law; their entrance into Canaan; the passage of Jordan; the fall of Jericho; the excision of the devoted nations; could all these things be done, and the rumour of them not be spread, in those days, among the nations, both those that were near, and those that were afar off?

The

The fame of this distinguished and extraordinary people must have increased with their conquests, till universal peace was established in the days of Solomon. To his court the princes of the earth resorted; struck with his glory, charmed with his wisdom, and desirous of being instructed by him. Would you know the exalted sentiments entertained by them of him, and of the people over whom he presided? Listen to the queen of Sheba speaking for them all. “It was a true report that I heard,

Disc.  
xii.

“in mine own land, of thine acts, and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and behold, the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel for

DISC. "ever, therefore made he thee king, to  
 XII. "do judgment and justice<sup>b</sup>."

---

The mission of the prophet Jonah to preach repentance to the inhabitants of the great city Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, is an event which deserves a place in your considerations on the subject before us.

When the Babylonian power was at its height under Nebuchadnezzar, the people of God, for their transgressions, were carried into captivity by him. Reflect upon the very remarkable incidents to which that captivity gave birth; the interpreta-

<sup>b</sup> "In Solomon's time there were 153000 profelytes in the land of Israel. 2 Chron. 11. 17." See FLEURY's *History of the Israelites*, Part II. Chap. IX. P. 84. This little book contains a concise, pleasing, and just account of the *manners, customs, laws, polity, and religion* of the Israelites. It is an excellent introduction to the reading of the Old Testament, and should be put into the hands of every young person. An elegant English version of it, by Mr. FARNEWORTH, dedicated to the present Archbishop of CANTERBURY, was printed in 1756, for WHISTON, WHITE, and BALDWIN.

tion of the monarch's dreams ; the accomplishment of one of them, by his degradation, and subsequent restoration ; the preservation of the three children in the furnace, and of Daniel, in the den of lions ; with the decrees, in favour of true religion, promulgated through the whole extent of that enormous empire, to which most of the kingdoms of the known world were at that time subject.

DISC.  
XII.

---

Upon the ruins of the Babylonian empire arose that of the Medes and Persians ; the celebrated founder of which began his reign with the publication of a decree, for the return of God's chosen people to their own land, with leave to rebuild their city and temple.

The prosperity and felicity of Israel after their return from Babylon ; the interview between the High Priest and Alexander, when upon his march to the conquest of Persia, as it stands recorded by Josephus ; the well known exploits of the Maccabees

DISC. against Antiochus ; the connection formed,  
 XII. about that period, between the Jews and  
 — the Romans ; the translation of the Scriptures into Greek, and the universal expectation produced thereby among the nations, of a ruler that should come out of Judea — All these considerations, though perhaps they are suffered, in the course of our reading to glide by us unobserved, as they occur separately, and unconnected with each other, yet when they are thrown together, and duly weighed, may serve greatly to assist us in forming our judgment concerning the state of the Gentiles, and the testimony from time to time borne to the true religion, by the then church of God, in the heathen world. Notwithstanding the light heaven has been pleased to manifest, whether in former or in latter times, many, both individuals and

The reader will find many curious and valuable observations upon this important and interesting subject, in the Bishop of CARLISLE's *Theory of Religion*, Part the 11<sup>d</sup> ; as also, in a dissertation of Dr. WATERLAND, subjoined to *Scripture vindicated*. See also LELAND's *advantage and necessity of the Christian Revelation*, Part 1. Ch. 29.

nations,

nations, have still continued to sit in *Disc.*  
darkness, and the shadow of death. The *xii.*  
fate of such it is not our business to deter-  
mine. One thing we know, and more  
we cannot, more we need not know; that  
in the last great day, when that point and  
all others shall be finally settled, He is to  
settle them, who, before men and angels,  
“ will be justified in his saying, and clear  
“ when he is judged.” What mercy can  
do, mercy will do. All iniquity shall then  
stop her mouth, and no person that shall  
be condemned, will have power or reason  
to complain. To the curiosity, which,  
negligent of it's own interest in Christ, is  
ever anxiously enquiring into the future  
destination of those who never heard of  
him, the proper answer, surely, is——  
“ What is that to thee? Follow thou me.”

That the Jew, with the Scriptures in his  
hands, should be blind to the counsels of  
God respecting the Gentiles and their re-  
turn to the church, is indeed truly mar-  
vellous. It was foretold, that the posteri-

**Disc.** ty of Japheth should one day “ dwell in  
**xii.** “ the tents of Shem<sup>d</sup>,” that in the pro-  
 mised seed of Abraham “ all the nations of  
 “ the earth should be blessed<sup>e</sup>,” that to  
 Shiloh should “ the gathering of the na-  
 “ tions be<sup>f</sup>.” Isaiah is very express, and  
 faith; There shall be a root of Jesse,  
 “ which shall stand for an ensign of the  
 “ people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and  
 “ his rest shall be glorious<sup>g</sup>.—It is a light  
 “ thing that thou shouldest be my servant,  
 “ to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to  
 “ restore the preserved of Israel; I will  
 “ also give thee for a light to the Gentiles,  
 “ that thou mayest be my salvation to the  
 “ ends of the earth<sup>h</sup>.—Arise, shine, for  
 “ thy light is come, and the glory of the  
 “ Lord is risen upon thee. For behold,  
 “ darkness shall cover the earth, and gross  
 “ darkness the people; but the Lord shall  
 “ arise upon thee, and his glory shall be  
 “ seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall  
 “ come to thy light, and kings to the

<sup>d</sup> Gen. ix. 27.<sup>e</sup> Gen. xii. 3.<sup>f</sup> Gen. xlix. 10.<sup>g</sup> Isai. xi. 10.<sup>h</sup> Isai. xlix. 6.

“ brightness

“ brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine Disc.  
“ eyes round about, and see; all they ga- XII.  
“ ther themselves together, they come to  
“ thee; thy sons shall come from far, and  
“ thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.  
“ Then thou shalt see, and flow together,  
“ and thine heart shall fear, and be en-  
“ larged; because the abundance of the  
“ sea shall be converted unto thee, the  
“ forces of the Gentiles shall come unto  
“ thee<sup>i</sup>.” No less clear are several pas-  
sages in the Psalms, which never failed to  
make a part of the synagogue service. “ All  
“ the ends of the world shall remember,  
“ and turn unto the Lord, and all the  
“ kindreds of the nations shall worship be-  
“ fore him<sup>k</sup>.—The princes of the nations  
“ shall be joined to the people of the God  
“ of Abraham<sup>l</sup>.—Praise the Lord all ye  
“ heathen, praise him all ye nations; for  
“ his merciful kindness is ever more and  
“ more towards us, and the truth of the  
“ Lord endureth for ever<sup>m</sup>.”

<sup>i</sup> Isai. lx. 1, &c.<sup>k</sup> Psal. xxii. 27.<sup>l</sup> Ps. xlvii. 9.<sup>m</sup> Ps. cxvii.

**Disc.** The event, which bore so capital a share  
**xii.** in the gracious designs of the Almighty,  
 which was thus predicted, and celebrated  
 beforehand, by patriarchs and prophets,  
 began, as at this season, to take place, by  
 the coming of the eastern sages to Bethle-  
 hem, in the name of us all, as representa-  
 tives of the heathen world. They were  
 the first-fruits of that glorious harvest, af-  
 terwards reaped and gathered by the Apo-  
 stles and their successors; they were the  
 standard bearers of that noble army, which,  
 from the four quarters of the globe, hath  
 since marched into the church, through  
 the gates mercifully thrown open to ad-  
 mit them. From the consideration of the  
*persons* mentioned in the text, we proceed  
 therefore to consider,

Secondly, their *journey*; the *occasion*, and  
 the *end* of it; “ They came to Jerusalem,  
 “ saying, Where is he that is born king of  
 “ the Jews? For we have seen his star in  
 “ the east, and are come to worship him.”

The

The birth of Christ was first revealed to the shepherds, who were Jews. For that purpose, the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and the *glory* of the Lord shone round about them; a proper intimation of *his* appearance, at the brightness of whose rising on the intellectual world, darkness was to vanish, and the shadows fly away. A sign of the same import was vouchsafed to the Gentiles, as their conductor to the new born Redeemer of mankind. “A *star*, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came, and stood over where the young child was.”

DISC.

XII.

I shall not take up your time in proposing conjectures on the nature and form of this star. It was undoubtedly such, as might best answer the end in view; and probably far exceeded the other stars, to appearance, in magnitude and brightness; as it notified the birth of one, who was fairer than the children of men, on whom rested the spirit of grace and glory.

How

DISC. How just and how beautiful an emblem  
 XII. was such a star of the blessed person to  
 whom it pointed ! Celestial in it's original ; framed of the purest materials ; admitting no dross and baseness into it's composition ; without spot, or the shadow of a cloud ; shedding a lustre incapable of being sullied by the objects on which it fell, and passing through all things undefiled ; moving above the world, though moving in it ; placed in heaven, to give light upon the earth ; rising in the east, but diffusing it's glories to the west ; the first-fruits of the day, the bright and the morning star, dispelling the shades, clearing the skies, eclipsing the other luminaries, reigning alone and unrivalled in the firmament ; from thence, not more bright than beneficial, exerting an influence, powerful, though silent and secret ; directing and attracting men to the salvation it portended !

<sup>a</sup> See these particulars beautifully expanded and enlarged upon, by the admirable Dr. South, in a discourse upon Rev. xxii. 16. " I am the root and the offspring of " David, and the bright and morning star." Vol. III. Sermon. vii.

The eastern Magi, as is evident from the D I S C.  
text, understood, before they began their XII.  
journey, that the star which they saw  
did by it's appearance indicate the birth  
of "the King of the Jews," that is, of  
the person foretold and expected, under  
that character, among the people of God.  
They understood, that this person, though  
styled "King of the *Jews*," would accept  
the oblations of the *Gentiles*, and extend  
to them the blessings of his reign. They  
understood, as it should seem, that he was  
more than man; "We have seen *his* star  
" in the east, and are come to *worship*  
" him." By what means is it likely they  
should have attained this knowlege?

It is certain, that at the period when  
these things happened, and for some time  
preceding it, a general expectation of a  
ruler to arise in Judea prevailed all over the  
world. Suetonius, not to mention other  
historians, expressly tells us, that an an-  
tient and uninterrupted opinion had pre-  
vailed *in all the east*, that at that time  
(namely,

**Disc.** (namely, at the beginning of the last Jewish war) it was decreed by the fates, that some coming out of Judea should obtain the sovereignty. And no wonder, as a learned writer well observes, that such an opinion should be propagated throughout the east, when we consider the vast number of Jews, which were spread over all the eastern countries. In the reign of Ahasuerus, or Artaxerxes Longimanus, the Jews were dispersed throughout all the provinces of the Persian monarchy, and that, in numbers sufficient to defend themselves against their enemies in those provinces; and many of the people of the land also, as we read in the book of Esther, became Jews. After the Babylonish captivity, the Jews increased so mightily, that we find them not only throughout Asia, but in Africa, and in many cities and islands of Europe, mentioned in the second chapter of the Acts. Wherever they dwelt, they made many proselytes to their religion; and in their attempts to this purpose, they must very much spread the expectation of the Messiah's

fish's coming; an article so important in *DISC.* itself, and so flattering to their national *XII.* vanity. These opportunities of being informed of the approaching Advent of the great King, the Magians of the east enjoyed in common with many other people. To which it may be added, that Zoroaster, the famous reformer of the Magian sect, is generally said to have been by extraction a Jew, and to have lived as a servant with one of the prophets, probably Daniel; he was well acquainted with the writings of Moses, and has inserted in his book many particulars from them.

Now, if we suppose the minds of men, of learned men more especially, to have been in this manner prepared, and rendered attentive to what happened, the sudden appearance of a new star in the heavens, supereminent in splendor, and pointing towards Judea, might, perhaps, even without any farther information, be construed by them as a sign, that the long looked for Prince and Saviour was actually born.

If

**DISC.** If we farther suppose, that the famous  
**XII.** prediction, delivered in the mountains of  
 the east, by Balaam, a prophet of their  
 own, who, having his eyes opened, saw,  
 and mentioned, so many ages before it's  
 appearance, "the STAR that should arise  
 "out of Jacob, the sceptre that should  
 "come out of Israel";" if we suppose, I  
 say, that this famous prediction was care-  
 fully preserved, and handed down from  
 one generation to another, as would most  
 probably be the case, it doubtless might  
 have lent it's assistance at this time, and  
 upon this occasion.

But after all, when we consider, that  
 every circumstance relative to the birth of  
 Christ was, and must needs be, extraordi-  
 nary and supernatural, full of wonder, and  
 full of mystery; when we reflect on the  
 journey and oblations of these sages, thus  
 representing, as it were, the whole hea-  
 then world, now at length returning to  
 the acknowledgement and adoration of it's

° Numbers xxiv. 17.

Redeemer,

Redeemer, who should have been all along an object of faith to the nations, as well as to the Jews ; why should we not conclude, that as an angel accompanied the glory that shone round the Jewish shepherds, and proclaimed to them the nativity of Jesus ; so some beneficent spirit was enjoined to communicate to these Gentile philosophers the same gracious and comfortable intelligence. This, however, we may most assuredly conclude that he who hung out the star in the firmament, visible to their outward eyes, took care that it should not be hung out in vain ; but that some attendant light should at the same time shine inward, and irradiate their minds with the knowlege of it's signification and import.

DISC.  
XII.  

---

The fact is clear. They saw, they understood, they set out. No distance, no difficulties, no dangers, were sufficient to deter them. They passed the rocks and sands, of the deserts, "the tents of Kedar," and "the hills of the robbers." Children of the faith of Abraham, they left their  
own

DISC. own country, obeying the heavenly call.

XII. Led by the star, as the Israelites of old by the pillar of fire, they pursued their way through the wilderness to the land of Promise, there to seek him, "in whom all the promises of God," made to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews, "were yea and amen."

Arrived at Jerusalem, they imparted the glad tidings to those from whom they should have received them. Neither afraid of Herod, nor ashamed of Messiah, they professed openly the occasion of their journey. They believed, and therefore they spake. "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" To you, O ye rulers and teachers in Israel, we apply ourselves. You must know the birth-place of the Redeemer. Saw ye him whom we seek? Tell us where we may find, and adore him.

Far other sentiments were excited, by this question, in the breast of Herod. Human policy would not suffer him to hear of

of a king, without thinking of a rival ; and **Disc.**  
therefore he immediately projected a plan **xii.**  
for the destruction of the new born prince. 

---

For this end, he summoned a council of the chief priests and elders, and demanded of them, where Christ should be born ? Their lips were intended to preserve knowledge ; and they did so. They answered, In Bethlehem of Judea ; and cited their authority from the prophet Micah. They gave true information, and directed others aright, though they went not, themselves. Herod enquired concerning Christ, as many do concerning his religion, in order not to revere and obey, but to oppose and destroy.

The Magi, having now obtained the desired information, proceeded to Bethlehem ; and lest their ardour should be damped by any doubt, lo the star which they saw in the east, and which, therefore, had disappeared for a time, again “ went before  
“ them, till it came and stood over where  
“ the young child was.” The sight of  
VOL. I.                      A a                      their

DISC. their original and faithful monitor cheered  
XII. their spirits, dispelling every anxious and  
— uneasy thought. “When they saw the star,  
“they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.”

When their guide had conducted them to their journey's end, we read not that they were at all offended, or disconcerted, at the humble and lowly state in which they found the heaven-proclaimed king. The queen of Sheba came from far to hear the wisdom, and see the glory of Solomon. She accordingly heard his wisdom, and saw his glory; both beyond even her high raised expectation. These men came from far, to behold the king of the Jews. But in his appearance there was neither beauty, nor glory, that they should desire, or admire him. They saw, they heard nothing, but signs of poverty and weakness. Great, surely, was their faith; and greater, one is tempted to think, must have been their knowledge of the divine dispensations, than we are aware of. Where the star rested, there was the person whom they had been directed

directed to seek. They therefore entered, D I S C.  
and adored; and the Gentiles acknowledged XII.  
him, whom the Jews disowned and reject-  
ed. They offered to him the richest pro-  
ductions of the country from whence they  
came; such things as were most precious,  
and of highest use and signification in or-  
namenting and exalting the services of the  
temple and altar. All they (says Isaiah)  
“from Sheba shall come; they shall bring  
“gold and incense, and,” by so doing,  
“they shall shew forth the praises of the  
“Lord,” while they thus devote them-  
selves and their substance to his service.  
And since the eastern Magi, as hath been  
before observed, are upon this occasion  
to be considered by us as the delegates and  
deputies of the heathen world, the history  
of their journey and their oblations speaks  
the same language with that employed by  
St. John in the Revelation, concerning the  
Christian church. “And the nations of  
“them that are saved shall walk in the  
“light of it; and the gates of it shall not

<sup>p</sup> Isai. LX. 6.

DISC. "be shut at all; and the kings of the  
 XII. "earth do bring their glory and honour  
 ————— "into it."<sup>9</sup>

Some reflections on the subject naturally offer themselves, in the way of *application*.

And first, Let us evermore, on this returning festival, give thanks unto our Lord God, for the revelation of that great mystery of mercy, the restoration of the Gentiles to the church, from which they had been, for so many ages, excluded; rather should we say, they had excluded themselves. The unhappy prodigal voluntarily left his father's house, the door of which was still open, whenever he should be disposed to return, and re-enter. But the time was long, ere he came to himself, and thought of being again received into the family of the faithful. No sooner was that the case, than the Father, as if he had all along been looking out, in hope and expectation of his child, saw him while he

<sup>9</sup> Rev. xxi. 24.

was yet a great way off, ran to meet him, DISC.  
embraced him with a parent's tenderness, XII.  
brought him into his house, made a feast  
for him, and commanded that no voice  
should be heard but that of joy and glad-  
ness, because he that had been lost was  
now found, he that had been dead was  
alive again!—"O sing unto the Lord a  
"new song; sing unto the Lord, all the  
"earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless his  
"name: shew forth his salvation from day  
"to day. Declare his glory among the  
"heathen, his wonders among all people.  
"For the Lord is great, and greatly to be  
"praised; he is to be feared above all  
"gods. For all the gods of the nations  
"are idols: but the Lord made the hea-  
"vens. Honour and majesty are before  
"him: strength and beauty are in his  
"sanctuary!"

Secondly, it may be remarked, that the  
persons who came as at this time to  
Bethlehem, were the learned of their coun-

<sup>1</sup> Pf. xcvi. 1, &c.

**DISC.** try, men particularly addicted to the sciences  
**XII.** of philosophy and astronomy. They contemplated the heavens, and at length were favoured with the sight of a star, which led them to him who made the heavens, and who was then descended from on high, to perform a work still more wonderful. Man was formed with an understanding, for the attainment of knowledge; and happy is he, who is employed in the pursuit of it. Ignorance is in it's nature unprofitable; but every kind of knowledge may be turned to use. Diligence is generally rewarded with the discovery of that which it seeks after; sometimes, of that which is much more valuable. Human learning, with the blessing of God upon it, introduces us to divine wisdom; and while we study the works of nature, the God of nature will manifest himself to us; since, to a well tutored mind, "The heavens," without a miracle, "declare his glory, and" "the firmament sheweth his handy work."

Thirdly, from the example of the Magi,  
Let us learn to be very watchful and observant

servant of those lights, which at sundry times and in divers manners are vouchsafed to us. At the last day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, and the circumstances of our lives shall pass in review, it will then be seen, that God did not "leave himself without witness." It will appear, that the sinner had many calls, both from within, and from without, to which he might have hearkened; and to which if he had hearkened, they had been the means of correcting, instructing, and saving him. Above all things, how attentive should we be to the Scriptures, wherein are contained the words that must finally decide the fate of those who have them in their hands, and are capable of perusing them. In them shines, with pure and ever-increasing lustre, the sure word of prophecy, pointing always from the beginning to the Saviour of mankind, and at last marking out the very place of his birth; like the star in the east, moving onward in it's sphere, "till it came, and stood over, where the young child was,"

DISC.  
XII.  

---

**DISC.** If we are not led by the one to seek after  
**XII.** the Redeemer, surely they who set out for  
 Judea, upon the evidence of the other,  
 must rise up in the judgment against us,  
 and condemn us.

Lastly, When we reflect upon the difficulties and dangers that lay in way of these eastern sages, and the unremitting perseverance which vanquished them all, we shall blush at the remembrance of those trifling obstructions in our Christian course, which we have so often been tempted to deem insuperable. Our faith, once fixed on the basis of it's proper evidence, should never be shaken by the cavils of sceptical and licentious men. For when there is great strength of argument set before us, if we refuse to do what appears most fit to be done, till every little objection is removed that metaphysical refinement can invent, we shall never take one wise resolution, as long as we live. Let faith, therefore, have it's perfect work ; let it go on, conquering, and to conquer, till we have thereby completely

completely overcome the world. Though **Disc.**  
 Herod should be moved, and all Jerusalem **XII.**  
 with him, let us follow our heavenly con-  
 ductor, and, rejoicing with exceeding great  
 joy, proceed directly to Bethlehem. There,  
 through meanness, poverty, and obscurity,  
 let us discern the king of the Jews, give  
 him the honour due unto his name, ac-  
 knowlege and adore him, as our Lord, and  
 our God. And since we are commanded  
 not to appear before the Lord empty, let  
 us bring presents, when we come into his  
 courts. Let us offer to him of our sub-  
 stance, and the first fruits of our increase;  
 let us offer to him of the true riches, with  
 which he has blessed us; faith, tried, pre-  
 cious, resplendent, as *gold*; devotion, ascend-  
 ing from fervent affections, like the smoke  
 of *frankincense* from the holy altar; love,  
 peace, joy, and the other graces of sancti-  
 fication, fragrant, cheering, and diffusive,  
 like "*myrrh*, and aloes, with all the chief  
 "spices, and powders of the merchant."  
 Let us offer to him our strength, our time,  
 and our talents, our souls and bodies, all  
 we have, and all we are, to worship and

DISC. obey him this day, and every day which  
 XII. it shall please him to add to our lives.

With these dispositions and resolutions if we now come to his light, and haste to the brightness of his rising, we shall hereafter behold him in his meridian exaltation, when heaven and earth shall be full of the majesty of his glory; when, the last enemy being destroyed, he shall appear, as the "Prince of Peace," in a city that hath foundations; when all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him; when he shall reign for ever and ever, King of kings, and Lord of lords; when he shall receive as his just and rightful tribute (the only tribute which can then be paid) the praises of his redeemed subjects, and the everlasting Hallelujahs of the celestial choir, ascribing, as we now do, to him, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, all blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, might, majesty, and dominion, for ever and ever. And let all the people say, AMEN.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.



